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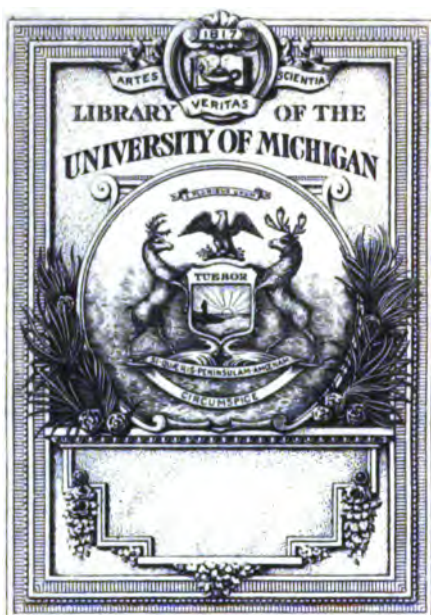
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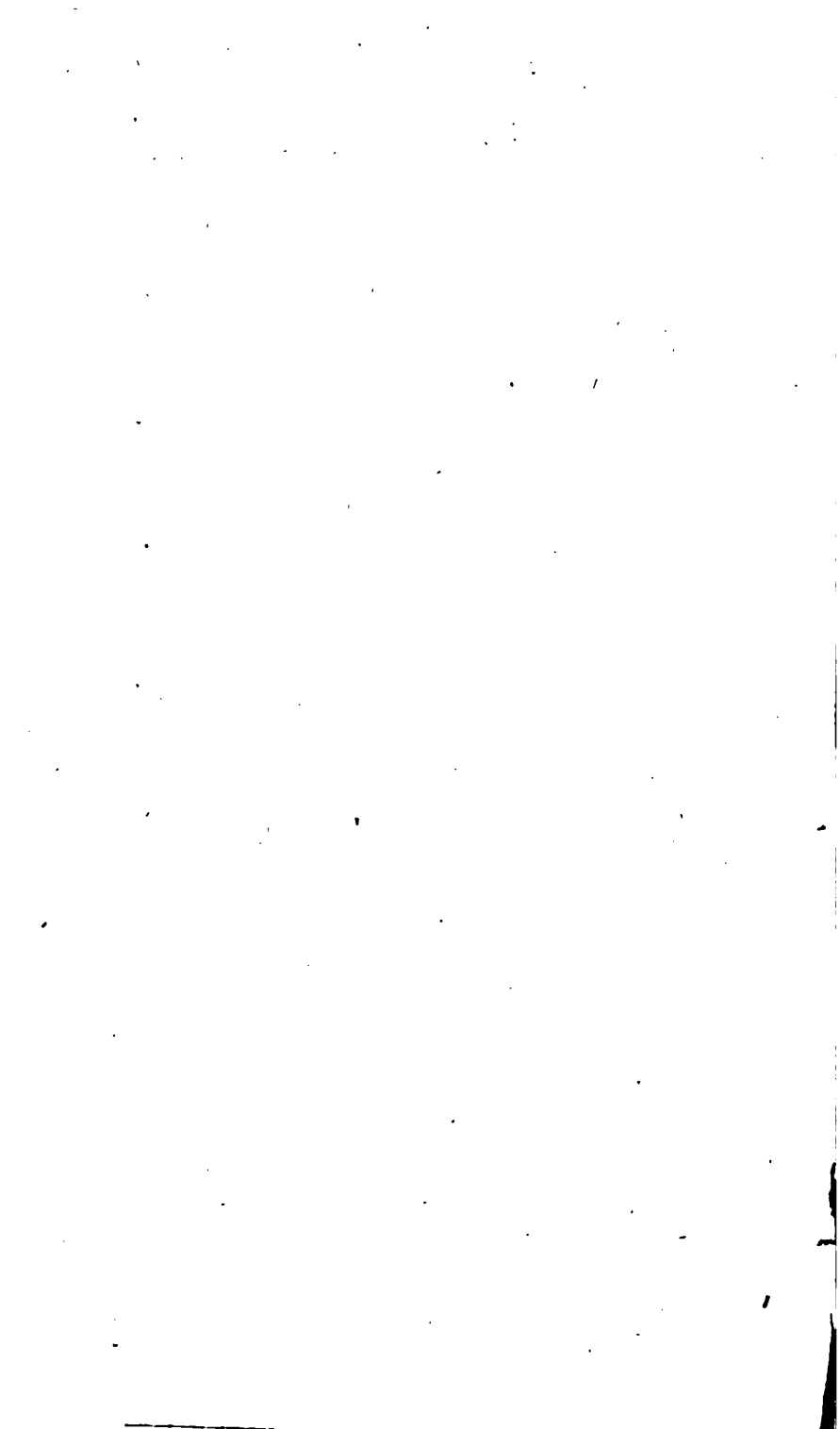
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**DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS**  
**IN THE**  
**HOUSE OF COMMONS.**  
**VOLUME XLIV:**

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By an Error of the Press the signature of Volume XLV. runs through the whole of the Volume, but is to be considered as Vol. XLIV. as in the title page.

A.

**A**CCOUNTS, relative to Barracks since the year 1791, 722—Of the extraordinary expences of the Army from 15 November to December 24, 1795, not provided for by Parliament, 723—Of the unprovided services belonging to the Office of Ordnance, as on the 31st December, 1795, 725—Estimate of the Debt of His Majesty's navy, as on the 31st December 1795, 726—Of money due on various Accounts to the Army, April 21, 1796, 730—Of money advanced by the Bank for the public service and outstanding December 31, 1792, and December 31, 1795, 731—Of the same on the 10th October, 1795, and 5th January, 1796, 732—Of money given for 1796, how disposed of, distinguished under the several heads, until March 3, 1796, and the parts remaining unsatisfied, with the deficiency thereupon, 733—Of Ways and Means for answering the same, 748—A particular Account of the several sums included in the account of the distribution

of money granted by an act of the last session, for enabling His Majesty to raise 2,500,000*l.* &c. 750—Of the sums granted by Parliament since October 29, 1795, and expended before April 5, 1796, with a statement of the services to which the same were applied, 756—Of Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, registered since December 31, 1795, 757—Of Exchequer Bills issued on the Vote of Credit granted for 1796, with the expence attending the same, and the amount issued to discharge the Arrears due December 1, 1795, 758—Of the total net produce of Taxes for one year ending April 5, 1796, 759—Of the income of the Consolidated Fund for one quarter ending April 5, 1795, 761—Of the charges upon the Consolidated Fund for the quarter ending April 5, 1795, 763—Of the income of the Consolidated Fund, in the quarter ending July 5, 1795, 769—Of the charges upon the same, in the same quarter, 771—Of the income of the Consolidated Fund, in the quarter ending October 10, 1795, 777—

Of the charges upon the same, in the same quarter, 779—Of the income of the Consolidated Fund for the quarter ending January 5, 1796, 786—Of the charges upon the same, for the same quarter, 788—Of the income of the Consolidated Fund for the quarter ending April 5, 1796, 794—Of the charges upon the same, for the same quarter, 796—Of the value of imports into Great Britain in 1792, 3, 4, and 5, distinguishing each year, &c. 802—Of the value of exports from Great Britain, in the same period, 806—Of the value of imports into, and exports from, Great Britain, in the last ten years, 810—Of the produce of the Duties of Customs, Excise, Stamps, and Incidents, respectively, for one year, ending October 10, 1795, 810—Of all additions made to the annual charge of the Public Debt, &c. 811—Of the produce of the Duties imposed for the purpose of defraying the increased charge occasioned by annuities granted in pursuance of several acts, 813—Of the produce of duties to be applied in aid of the Consolidated Fund in respect of the charge thereon by the annuity and management on 6,250,000*l.* payable out of the said Fund, 814—Of the money paid to the different departments, payable from the Civil List from January 5, 1795, to September 12, 1795, 819—Of money received on the Loan of 1795, of money received for the Lottery of 1795, of money issued for the Land and Malt Tax for 1795, of what sums have been raised on the Vote of Credit for 1795, of monies reserved for payment of the Civil List from January 4, to September 12, 1795, 821—Of Supplies granted by Parliament for 1796, 835—Of Ways and Means for raising the Supplies granted for 1796, 837.

Addresses to the King, Queen, Prince and Princess of Wales moved for, on the safe delivery of the Princess of a Daughter, 2—Their answers to the same, 6. Anatomization; motion for leave to bring in a bill to anatomise the bodies of persons executed for burglaries and felonies, negatived, 287. Annuities, *See* Accounts. Army Expences, *See* Accounts.

## B.

Barracks; conversation respecting the expence incurred in erecting them, 4—Farther conversation on the same, 12—General Smith moves for an account of the expediture in erecting Barracks, 371—Accounts relative to the erection of Barracks, 722. Bank, *See* Accounts. Blake, Sir Francis, Petition of, respecting the national debt, &c. 10. Blood-hounds; General Macleod states their having been employed against the Maroons in the West Indies, 115—Moves to address His Majesty for copies of the correspondence relative to the carrying on the War against the Maroons in Jamaica, 337—Which motion he withdraws, 346. Budget, the, opened by Mr. Pitt, 441—Debate on the Report of the Committee of Ways and Means, 475.

## C.

Cawthorne, Colonel,—Motion that the papers respecting his Court Martial should be printed, 270—Motion for taking them into consideration, 485—The proceedings of the Court Martial read, 571—His defence, 571—Motion made and carried that he be expelled the House, 592. Civil List, *See* Accounts.

# INDEX.

Consolidated Fund, *See* Accounts. Exports, *See* Accounts.

Corn; Mr. Lechmere moves for a bill to be introduced to prevent the exportation of Corn, and to prevent it being sold at Market by small samples, 213—Description of a hand-mill used in India for grinding Corn, 217—Mr. Lechmere moves for an account of Corn exported in 1776, 1777, 1794, and 1795, &c. 346—Moves to resolve into a Committee on the high price of Corn, 700.

Cornwallis's, (Admiral) letter, in return to the thanks of the House of the 10th November, 1795, 1.

Crowates; Committee on the bill for their relief deferred, 534—Bill read a second time, 598.

Customs, *See* Accounts.

## D.

Debts; Mr. Alderman Lushington moves to bring in a bill for the better recovery of small debts within the city of London, 18—The bill withdrawn, 504.

Division, *See* List.

Dogs; Mr. Dent moves for a tax on dogs, 364—Motion for a second reading of the bill deferred 430—Motion that the Speaker do leave the chair on the same, negatived, 506—Mr. Pitt's resolutions respecting the same, 530—Motion to go into a Committee, 702.

## E.

East India Budget—Motion of Mr. Secretary Dundas to defer the consideration of it, 715.

Elections—Mr. Douglas moves to bring in a bill to enforce the attendance of Members on the days appointed to elect Committees on controverted Elections, 59.

Estimate, *See* Accounts.

Exchequer Bills, *See* Accounts.

Excise, *See* Accounts.

Expired and expiring Laws, *See* Laws.

## G.

Game Laws—Mr. Curwen moves for the repeal of the Game Laws, and to substitute other provisions, 231—Mr. Curwen moves to go into a Committee on the Game Laws, 290—Bill read a first time, and the second reading deferred, 332—Debate on the motion for the second reading, 560.

## H.

Hats—Conversation respecting the bill for regulating the Duty on them, 485—The House in a Committee on the same, 529—Debate on the Report of the Committee, 532.

Harvey's, (Admiral) letter, in return to the thanks of the House of the 2d November, 1795, 2.

Hunter's (Dr.) Museum—Sir G. S. Evelyn moves for leave to bring in a Petition to determine whether the House would purchase the Museum, 191—Which Petition is referred to a Select Committee, 194.

## I.

Imports, *See* Accounts.

## K.

King's (The) Speech on closing Parliament, 719.

## L.

Labourers, Mr. Whitbread moves the second reading of the bill for regulating their wages, 19.

Land—Motion to prevent its being let into large farms, &c. 56—Sir J. Sinclair moves to inquire into the loss likely to be sustained by the Officers of the House, if the Bill for the general enclosure of Waste Lands should pass, 115.



**Land Tax, See Accounts.**

**Landed Succession Tax Bill**, read a first time, 486—Motion to re-commit it, 602—To consider the Report, 643—For the third reading of it, 705—The third reading deferred, 708.

**Laws**—Mr. Abbott moves for a Committee to take into consideration and Report an account of all temporary Laws expired and about to expire, 422—Names of the Committee appointed, 425—Copy of the Report of the Committee, 822.

**Legacy Succession Tax-Bill**—Mr. Chancellor Pitt brings up the amendments and moves to have them read a first time, 226—The same read a second time, 227—Debate on Mr. Chancellor Pitt's motion to consider the Report, 247—On the third reading of the bill, 362—Mr. Sheridan moves to postpone carrying it into effect, 708.

**List of the Minority on Mr. Grey's Motion to negotiate for Peace**, 54—Of the Minority on Mr. Smith's Motion respecting negotiating of the loan with the Emperor, 191—Of the Minority on Mr. Grey's Motion to go into a Committee on the State of the Nation, 287—Of the division on the question for abolishing the Slave Trade, 323.

**Loans**—Mr. M. Robinson moves that no Member of the House shall have a share in any contract, loan, &c. 15—Debate on Mr. W. Smith's motion respecting the negotiation of the late loan to the Emperor, 100—Debate on the resolution that free and open competition is the general principle of negotiating loans, 118—Debate on Mr. Jekyll's motions respecting the same loan, 194.—Further observations on the loan, 471, 475—Conversation respecting another loan to the Emperor, 651.—Account of the money received on the loan of 1795, 821.

**Lottery, See Accounts.**

## M.

**Majority, See List.**

**Malt Tax, See Accounts.**

**Manning, Captain**, Petition of respecting his being in possession of a bill of exchange drawn on a larger stamp than the Law required, which Petition is ordered to lie on the table, 483.

**Minority, See List.**

## N.

**Nation, State of, Debate on Mr. Grey's motion to go into a Committee on the State of the Nation**, 252,—Debate on Mr. Fox's motion to address His Majesty on the same, 656.

**Navy Bills, See Accounts and Supply.**

**Navy Debt, See Accounts.**

**Negroes, See Slave Trade.**

## O.

**Ordinance Services, See Accounts.**

## P.

**Peace**—Debate on Mr. Grey's motion to negotiate for a Peace with the Executive Directory of France 34.

**Pewter Pots, See Pots.**

**Police Bill**—Debate on the motion to bring in a bill to make it perpetual, 89—The motion to continue it for five years, carried, 519.

**Poor, See Labourer.**

**Pots**—Mr. Fox's motion for the second reading of the bill to prevent the stealing of pewters pots deferred, 429—The same motion again made and rejected, 480.

**Public Money, Debate on the motions of Mr. Grey relative to the expenditure of it**, 608.

# INDEX.

## Q.

**Quakers**—Mr. Serjeant Adair petitions the House in their behalf, 484—**Moves** for leave to bring in a bill for their relief, 523—The bill read, 532—**Motion** to consider the Report, 712—The bill read a third time, 713.

## R.

**Report** from the Committee upon temporary Laws expired or expiring, 822.

## S.

**Sardinia, King of**—motion for a subsidy to him of 200,000*l.* 593—**Conversation** between Mr. Chancellor Pitt and Mr. Jekyll on the same, 704.

**Slave Trade**—**Debate** on Mr. Wilberforce's motion to abolish the Slave Trade at a limited time, 61—**Conversation** on General Smith's motion for the order of the day on the abolition of the Slave Trade, 229—**Debate** on the second reading, 231—**Debate** on the motion for going into a Committee on the Slave Trade, 248—**Debate** on the report of the Committee on the abolition of the Slave Trade, 292—Mr. Francis gives notice of his intended motion to ameliorate the condition of Negroes in the West India islands, 336—**Debate** on Mr. Francis's motion, 396—The House in a Committee on the Slave carrying bill, 526.

**Sombreuil, Count de**; General Tarleton moves for a copy of a Letter from the Count de S. to the Secretary at War, relative to the Quiberon expedition, 426—Mr. Sheridan reads copies of two letters from Count de S. to the Secretary at War, relative to that expedition, from the newspaper of the True Briton—**Conversation** respecting the same, 431—**Debate** on Mr. Sheridan's motion for Official copies of them, 434

**Stamps**, *See* Accounts.

**State of the Nation**, *See* Nation.

**Supply**—**Motions** of Mr. Pitt in a Committee of Supply, 569—The House in a Committee of, and debate thereupon, 640.  
**Supplies, Account of**, *See* Accounts.

## T.

**Taxes, Produce of**, *See* Accounts.  
**Transport Bills**, *See* Accounts.

## V.

**Veterinary College**,—Petition from praying for the aid of Parliament, 597.

**Victualling Bills**, *See* Accounts.

**Vote of Credit Bill**—**Motion** to defer considering the Report on it, 88—**Debate** on the third reading of the bill, 96.

## W.

**Waste Lands**—**Motion** of Sir John Sinclair for their cultivation, 3—Mr. Powys moves that the Committee appointed to consider of the cultivation of Waste Lands have power to divide the said bill into two parts, 334.

**Ways and Means**, *See* Accounts and Budget.

**West Indies**—Mr. Sheridan moves for certain papers relative to the expedition against the West Indies 425—Which motion is adjourned to a future day, 426—Moved that the adjourned debate be now resumed, 487.—Copy of the Proclamation of Admiral Parker and General Forbes, dated S. Domingo, December 10, 1795, 495—**Debate** again resumed, 534.

**Wet Docks**—Mr. Manning presents a Petition from the Merchants of London in favor of them, 6—**Motion** for a second reading of the Bill postponed, 252—**Debate** on the motion for a second reading, 324.

**Wine Duty Bill**—The House in a Committee on it, 599—**Motion** for the third reading of the bill deferred, 653.

# I N D E X

## TO THE S P E A K E R S' N A M E S.

### A.

**ABBOT**, Mr. 396, 422  
**Adair**, Mr. Serjeant, 77, 230, 250,  
 251, 288, 314, 406, 415, 424,  
 484, 485, 523, 532, 559, 653,  
 656, 712, 713, 714  
**Addington**, Rt. Hon. H. 1, 12,  
 113, 191, 207, 230, 331, 436,  
 480, 484, 487, 534, 571, 598,  
 653, 655, 704, 705, 708, 714,  
 715  
**Addington**, Mr. J. H. 87, 249  
**Anderfon**, Mr. Alderman, 7, 58,  
 113  
**Arden**, Sir R. P. 656, 714  
**Attorney General**—See Sir J.  
 Scott

### B.

**Barham**, Mr. 87, 249, 341, 343,  
 528  
**Baring**, Sir F. 208  
**Bastard**, Mr. 605, 647  
**Berkley**, Capt. 531, 559, 560  
**Bouverie**, Mr. 249, 522, 592  
**Browne**, Mr. I. H. 91, 191, 290,  
 532, 607  
**Buller**, Mr. 644  
**Bunbury**, Sir Charles, 59  
**Burdon**, Mr. 30, 247, 335  
**Burton**, Mr. 89  
**Buxton**, Mr. 28, 55, 57, 67, 220,  
 221, 239, 250, 288, 367, 481,  
 511, 531, 562, 571, 601, 702  
**Byng**, Mr. 229

### C.

**Canning**, Mr. 521, 522  
**Cavendish**, Lord G. 643  
**Cawthorne**, Mr. 571  
**Chancellor of the Exchequer**.—See  
 Mr. Chancellor Pitt  
**Cocks** (misalled Cox) Mr. 568  
**Coke**, Mr. T. W. 55  
**Coxhead**, Sir T. 29

**Courtenay**, Mr. 67, 193, 290,  
 343, 391, 513, 531, 590  
**Crewe**, Mr. 643  
**Curtis**, Mr. Alderman, 6, 252,  
 327, 483, 522  
**Curwen**, Mr. 55, 60, 191, 194,  
 219, 226, 231, 246, 247, 248,  
 272, 290, 291, 332, 333, 503,  
 560, 568, 570, 571

### D.

**Dent**, Mr. 12, 74, 231, 250, 291,  
 323, 345, 360, 364, 369, 429,  
 431, 479, 480, 481, 503, 506,  
 511, 519, 531, 703  
**Dolben**, Sir W. 250, 336, 526,  
 529, 650, 713, 714  
**Douglas**, Rt. Hon. Sylvester 59,  
 114, 118, 704  
**Duncombe**, Mr. 503  
**Dundas**, Mr. Secretary, 78, 94,  
 298, 339, 398, 419, 422, 426,  
 474, 486, 496, 499, 527, 528,  
 534, 556, 557, 602, 607, 653,  
 715, 718  
**Dundas**, Mr. R. 291  
**Dundas**, Mr. Charles, 522

### E.

**East**, Mr. 418, 655  
**Edwards**, Mr. 30  
**Elliot**, Hon. E. J. 6  
**Evelyn**, Sir G. S. 191

### F.

**Fergusson**, Sir Adam, 647.  
**Fox**, Mr. 17, 30, 46, 81, 92, 97,  
 117, 183, 200, 242, 247, 289,  
 290, 306, 336, 349, 362, 382,  
 395, 409, 422, 427, 428, 429,  
 437, 440, 461, 471, 482, 483,  
 487, 499, 501, 553, 556, 558,  
 562, 593, 595, 602, 633, 645,  
 655, 656, 695  
**Francis**, Mr. 156, 193, 206, 207,

# INDEX.

215, 225, 240, 288, 294, 334,  
335, 336, 357, 351, 371, 396,  
398, 421, 477, 481, 500, 522,  
525, 528, 560, 565, 568, 590,  
595, 597, 655, 700, 704, 705

## G.

Grey, Mr. 4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 16,  
34, 55, 60, 88, 89, 94, 96,  
203, 206, 245, 252, 279, 286,  
336, 352, 363, 370, 371, 393,  
395, 396, 454, 472, 479, 487,  
502, 519, 520, 521, 546, 556,  
600, 602, 603, 608, 641, 643,  
650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 707,  
712

## H

Harrison, Mr. 520, 566, 596,  
643, 644  
Hill, Sir R. 74  
Honeywood, Mr. 225  
Huffey, Mr. 33, 58, 193, 220,  
226, 335, 503, 559, 598

## I.

Jekyll, Mr. 18, 117, 118, 194,  
210, 504, 530, 604, 704, 705  
Jenkinson, Mr. 70, 246, 266, 527,  
567  
Joddrell, Mr. 227, 287, 290, 533,  
598  
Jolliffe, Mr. 241, 431, 531, 571

## L.

Lechmere, Mr. 9, 19, 27, 30, 56,  
57, 213, 220, 292, 346, 368,  
429, 430, 519, 526, 608, 700,  
703  
Le Mesurier, Mr. Alderman, 8,  
229  
Lewes, Sir W. 8, 229, 332, 529,  
530  
Long, Mr. 61, 198, 346  
Lord (the) Mayor, See Mr. Al-  
derman Curtis  
Lushington, Mr. Alderman, 8, 18,  
19, 228, 229, 230, 327, 332,  
504, 505

## M.

228, 292, 337, 345, 532, 586,  
589, 711, 712  
Mainwaring, Mr. 361, 529  
Major, Mr. Heninker, 114, 241  
Manning, Mr. 6, 8, 59, 252, 324,  
421  
Martin, Mr. 33, 212, 220, 225,  
227, 286, 479, 525, 529, 650,  
702  
Master of the Rolls—See Sir R. P.  
Arden  
Milbank, Mr. 249  
Mitford, Sir J. 208, 227, 352, 571,  
592, 596, 605, 645  
Montague, Mr. M. 273, 298,  
647  
Morgan, Sir C. 370

## N.

Newnham, Mr. Alderman, 227,  
347, 362, 471, 597, 607, 644

## P.

Penton, Mr. 511  
Pitt, Mr. Chancellor, 2, 4, 16,  
22, 34, 41, 55, 71, 93, 95, 97,  
113, 116, 118, 174, 207, 212,  
222, 226, 227, 228, 291, 318,  
329, 332, 333, 347, 358, 360,  
363, 366, 371, 388, 396, 415,  
426, 428, 430, 439, 440, 441,  
459, 469, 471, 472, 474, 476,  
478, 486, 487, 499, 500, 505,  
518, 519, 521, 522, 526, 528,  
529, 530, 532, 533, 555, 556,  
558, 559, 564, 569, 570, 587,  
592, 593, 594, 598, 600, 601,  
602, 603, 607, 617, 642, 643,  
649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654,  
681, 702, 704, 708, 710  
Plumer, Mr. 59  
Popham, Mr. 334  
Powys, Mr. 60, 218, 241, 334,  
336  
Pulteney, Sir W. 200, 266, 604,  
646  
Pybus, Mr. 370

## R.

Rafleigh, Mr. 226, 349, 362,  
602  
Robinson, Mr. M. 4, 9, 15, 17,

# INDEX.

91, 209, 279, 342, 420, 505,  
520, 644, 653, 694, 711  
Role, Mr. 9, 14, 88, 218, 314,  
334, 422, 425, 431, 502, 504,  
527, 528, 529, 559, 599, 640  
Rous, Sir J. 568  
Ruffell, Lord W. 90, 598  
Ryder, Mr. 6, 57, 244, 252, 291,  
332, 336, 527

## S.

Salisbury, Sir R. 12, 247, 518,  
568  
Sargent, Mr. 479  
Scott, Sir W. 598, 712, 714  
Scott, Mr. D. 474  
Scott, Sir J. 207, 289, 355, 357,  
604, 648  
Secretary at War—See Rt. Hon.  
W. Windham  
Secretary of State—See Mr. Secre-  
tary Dundas  
Sheffield, Lord, 114, 333, 335,  
503, 532, 606, 702  
Sheridan, Mr. 99, 100, 189, 328,  
332, 342, 395, 396, 425, 426,  
428, 431, 440, 473, 484, 485,  
486, 487, 488, 498, 500, 502,  
503, 504, 506, 519, 520, 533,  
547, 555, 557, 558, 566, 596,  
597, 600, 601, 602, 608, 639,  
641, 642, 648, 651, 653, 654,  
703, 707, 712  
Sinclair, Sir John, 3, 4, 114, 335,  
503, 602  
Smith, General, 4, 5, 12, 14, 15,  
33, 88, 89, 91, 95, 209, 219,  
225, 229, 230, 231, 248, 251,  
290, 291, 293, 332, 333, 360,  
361, 362, 369, 371, 431, 434,  
474, 475, 482, 485, 487, 502,  
503, 505, 506, 521, 529, 534,  
557, 558, 571, 582, 592, 596,  
600, 607, 608, 646, 713, 714,  
715  
Smith, Mr. W. 12, 75, 89, 100,  
113, 118, 221, 249, 357, 390,  
418, 422, 475, 529, 532, 558,  
649, 650  
Smith, Mr. R. 714

Solicitor General—See Sir J. Mit-  
ford  
Speaker, The — See Rt. Hon. H.  
Addington  
Stanley, Col. 366  
Steele, Mr. 172, 206, 275, 286,  
395, 396, 473, 520, 639  
Stephens, Sir P. 570, 640  
Stopford, Lord, 4, 369  
Sumner, Mr. 532, 597  
Sutton, Sir R. 334, 561, 571,  
714

## T.

Tarleton, General, 5, 64, 220,  
225, 231, 248, 291, 322, 426,  
428, 429, 500, 527, 555, 589,  
592, 597, 641, 642, 650, 711,  
713, 714  
Taylor, Mr. M. A. 377  
Thornton, Mr. 328, 479  
Turner, Sir G. P, 274, 279,  
369  
Tyrconnel, Lord, 371, 506

## V.

Vanfittart, Mr. 30

## W.

Whitbread, Mr. 19, 31, 34, 95,  
Wigley, Mr. 114, 526, 584  
Wilberforce, Mr. 4, 14, 61, 87,  
91, 95, 219, 229, 331, 245,  
248, 251, 291, 360, 368, 525,  
526, 599, 703, 713, 714, 715  
Windham, Rt. Hon. W. 4, 5, 13,  
55, 90, 241, 251, 316, 373,  
417, 426, 428, 429, 434, 436,  
483, 504, 508, 519, 520, 521,  
596, 640, 641, 646, 712

## Y.

Yorke, Mr. 117, 206  
Young, Sir W. 7, 8, 65, 192,  
193, 231, 292, 326, 415, 431,  
483

THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES

OF THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS,

In the SIXTH SESSION of the  
Seventeenth Parliament of GREAT BRITAIN;

Appointed to be holden at WESTMINSTER,

On THURSDAY, the 25th of NOVEMBER, 1790.

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*Tuesday, 2d February.*

**T**HIS day the House met pursuant to their last adjournment.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received, from the honourable Vice Admiral Cornwallis, the following letter, in return to the thanks of this House, signified to him by Mr. Speaker, in obedience to their commands of the 10th day of November last.

SIR,

I have had the honour of receiving your letter, with the thanks of the House of Commons, upon the conduct of a Squadron of His Majesty's ships under my orders on the 16th and 17th days of June last.

I feel, Sir, most sensibly, the very high honour conferred upon me by this vote,

To have in any degree obtained the favourable opinion of the House of Commons, was, indeed, far beyond any thing I could have aspired to.

It was the undaunted spirit of the Captains, Officers, and men of every description, on board of those ships, which deterred the enemy from mak-

ing a more vigorous attack: I will not fail to communicate to them the distinguished and honourable manner which it has pleased the House of Commons to reward their good services.

Permit me, Sir, to add, that I am deeply impressed with the very obliging manner in which you have been pleased to convey the vote of thanks.

I have the honour to be,  
with the greatest respect,

S I R,

your most obedient  
humble Servant,

WILLIAM CORNWALLIS.

Dated on board the Royal  
Sovereign, at Spithead,  
30th of December, 1795.

*To the Right Honourable Henry Addington, Speaker.*

Mr. SPEAKER also acquainted the House, that he had received, from Rear Admiral Harvey, the following letter, in return to the thanks of this House, signified to him by Mr. Speaker, in obedience to their commands of the 2d day of November last.

*Prince of Wales, Spithead, January 11th, 1796.*

S I R,

I have this day the honour of your letter of the 3d of November last, transmitting to me the resolution of the House of Commons of the preceding day, on the victory obtained over the enemy the 23d of June last, by a detachment of His Majesty's fleet under the command of Admiral Lord Bridport.

I request the favour that you will be pleased to assure the honourable the House of Commons, that I entertain the highest sense of the honour they have been pleased to confer on me by their vote of thanks; this tribute of approbation on my endeavours to promote the service of my King and country cannot but be highly gratifying to the feelings of an officer, and for which I shall ever retain the most grateful remembrance.

I beg you will allow me to return you my thanks for the very polite manner in which you have been pleased to signify to me the resolutions of the House.

I have the honour to be,

S I R,

Your most obedient  
humble Servant,

HENRY HARVEY.

*Right Honourable Henry Addington.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that an address should be presented to His Majesty, congratulating him on the birth of a Princess, which was agreed to *nem. con.* that a similar one should be presented



to Her Majesty ; and that a message to the same effect should be sent to the Prince and Princess of Wales.

The House having resumed the consideration of the Report of the Committee on waste lands, upon the second reading of the resolutions,

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR rose to move for leave to bring in a bill <sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> to facilitate the division of waste lands by agreement among the parties interested, and to remove certain legal disabilities to carrying such measures into effect." He said, it might have been his duty in moving for leave to bring in a bill of this nature to enlarge upon the high importance to the community of the object to which it was directed, had not the attention of the Public been of late so much turned to the subject, and had not it been so amply explained in the Report, which every Member had an opportunity to peruse. In another stage of the business, however, he would take the liberty of delivering his sentiments more at large. At present, he would only say, that in whatever view the matter was considered, whether as in its consequences affecting the population of the country, and of course its naval and military power, or as influencing its commerce and manufactures, by improvements in agriculture, from which the strength of a state was derived, it deserved the most serious attention of the Legislature. As far as he could judge from an excursion he had made into the best cultivated parts of this island, particularly the county of Norfolk, and from surveying the improvement that had taken place both in land of the richest soil, and that which was originally barren, he was convinced that, great as these were, they were nothing compared to the advantages that would result from the plans proposed by the Committee, provided they were sanctioned by this and the other House of Parliament. The bill would have the advantage of being drawn by a Select Committee of that House. It had been submitted to the inspection of the most respectable Judges, the most distinguished Lawyers, and most enlightened country gentlemen, of whom the nation had to boast, and even in its present shape many persons of the greatest eminence had pronounced, that by it there would be no difficulty in dividing any lands in the kingdom. Its intention was to diminish the expence of inclosing lands. Including those that might have the sanction of this House before the end of the session, there had already passed in all 1900 private bills, the expence of which had been at least 800,000*l*. Instead of imposing such an expence upon private persons, before they could inclose their own lands, if the Legislature had employed the same sum in encouraging agriculture, the scarcity now prevailing might not have been felt, nor would we

have been under the necessity of expending, perhaps, the sum of 5 millions annually in bounties upon corn, and in stimulating the industry, and promoting the agriculture of other countries. By giving effect to the measure recommended by the Committee, a similar pressure might in future be prevented, and the wealth of the nation infinitely increased.—Leave granted *nem. con.*

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR likewise moved “That this day se’n-night the House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider the propriety of granting a bounty on the raising of potatoes.”—Agreed to.

Mr. GREY rose and said, that previous to the adjournment a message had been received from His Majesty, announcing, that such a state of things had taken place in France, as would induce him to give the speediest effect to any desire for peace that might be shewn by the French Government. This communication had raised a very general hope of peace, and he trusted that no circumstances had intervened by which it would be disappointed. At present he only rose to ask His Majesty’s Ministers if they meant to give any communication to the House in pursuance of this message, on the state of affairs relative to a peace.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that it was not incumbent upon him to make any answer to the question.

Mr. GREY then gave notice, that on Monday se’n-night he would make a motion relative to peace.

Mr. M. ROBINSON gave notice, that on Thursday se’n-night he would move for leave to bring in a bill to incapacitate Members of Parliament from having any share in loans.

The House adjourned.

*Wednesday, 3d February.*

Lord STOPFORD reported to the House, that His Majesty had been waited on with the address, congratulatory on the birth of a Princess, which he was pleased to receive most graciously.

Mr. WILBERFORCE gave notice, that he should make, to-morrow fortnight, a motion respecting the abolition of the slave trade.

The SECRETARY AT WAR presented some accounts of the expences incurred in the erection of barracks.

General SMITH said, he was happy to see even a part of those accounts which had been so long required. He could not, however, but feel some surprise, that after a delay of two months the whole of these accounts were not yet in readiness. The certain expence of these erections was more than 650,000*l.* exclusive of what

might be incurred, and yet that House was without any precise information on the subject. He hoped, however, that the rest would be shortly prepared, that the subject might come regularly under Parliamentary discussion.

The SECRETARY AT WAR was surprised that the honourable gentleman should impute it as matter of blame to him that Parliament had adjourned for six weeks, for certainly it was impossible that he could bring down accounts to that House, when it was not sitting. The reason why the accounts were still incomplete was, that from the nature of the order of the House, that the accounts of those which are erecting, and which are in contemplation to be erected, as well as those which are already erected, should be produced, there was considerable difficulty in making out the accounts with precision. Of one thing he was confident, that there had been no delay in the office which he had the honour to superintend.

Mr. GREY was aware of the extent of the difficulty which was occasioned by the extent of the system which the Executive Government were now pursuing in the building of barracks. He knew also that accounts could not be produced, when the House was not sitting. But the order for their production was passed three weeks before the adjournment, and since that, other six weeks had elapsed, and still the accounts were found to be incomplete. He hoped that Ministers were not so negligent of their duty, as to go into a system of undefined expence, without acting upon any given estimate. If this was the case, their conduct was most culpable indeed; but at all events, the delay which had accompanied the making out of these papers, was highly criminal.

The SECRETARY AT WAR replied, that there were still several barracks to be erected, which were not at first in contemplation, and of which the estimates had not been as yet presented to the board.

General TARLETON reprobated the system *in toto*. There were times, he said, since the Revolution, when the mention of such a system would have made every man in that House to shudder. But now every such measure was heard with philosophic composure, and it seemed to be the sole duty of that House, to pay the accounts sent in by Ministers, whenever the latter chose to present them.

The accounts were ordered to lie on the table, and on the motion of Mr. Grey, to be printed.

General SMITH moved, that there be laid upon the table, an account of the quantity of corn and flour imported into this king-

dom, since the passing of the late bill, with the names of the ports at which the entries have been made, and the names of the persons who claimed the bounty on such imports.

Ordered.

*Thursday, February 4.*

Mr. RYDER acquainted the House, that the gentlemen, appointed to attend Her Majesty with the congratulation of this House, had attended Her Majesty accordingly; and that Her Majesty was pleased to say:

*Gentlemen,*

*I return you my sincere thanks for your congratulations on the birth of a Princess, and for the share you take in the satisfaction I must receive from an event in which I feel myself so nearly interested.*

*Friday, February 5.*

Mr. EDWARD JAMES ELIOT reported to the House, that their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales had been attended with the congratulatory message of this House, upon her Royal Highness's having been delivered of a Princess; and that His Royal Highness was pleased to return the following answer:

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

*I and the Princess are both exceedingly gratified by this proof of your duty to His Majesty, and of the interest you take in the increase of His family; and we return you our particular thanks for your congratulations to us on the present occasion.*

*Monday, February 8.*

Mr. MANNING presented a petition from a number of merchants resident in the cities of London and Westminster and the Borough of Southwark, for leave to bring in a bill to enable them to erect and establish new wet-docks, and legal quays and wharfs upon the river Thames, according to some plans presented with the petition, as the increased commerce of the country required such accommodations.

The LORD MAYOR begged permission to trouble the House with a few words before the petition was laid on the table. He agreed with the petitioners, that the increased commerce of the country required additional accommodations; but he hoped that the House would consider that the corporation of the city of London enjoyed certain franchises, privileges, and immunities, as settled upon them by charters and various acts of Parliament, which

would be totally done away if the object of the petitioners, according to their present plan, were confirmed by law and carried into execution.—During the present war the merchants had been greatly incommoded for want of quays and wharfs to land their imports, or ship their exports from this country, with any reasonable expedition, owing to the detention of vessels, both at home and abroad, for convoy; whereby the river Thames, though so admirably large, was scarcely large enough for the quantity of traders in it, at the same time to unload or ship their goods with convenience and dispatch. A similar inconvenience was experienced and complained of some few years ago, and a bill was accordingly brought into Parliament to obviate it, which passed that House; but for what reason he did not know, it was objected to elsewhere, and did not pass into a law. Now in respect to the present measure he was desired by his constituents and the corporation of London to inform the House, that the corporation had already authorized some of its members to attend the committees of the petitioning merchants, and was desirous to render every kind of accommodation possible, consistent with their own charters. That furthermore they had already allowed an immense sum, as the expenditure for plans of improvement and accommodation, and that if the wharfs were erected and established according to the present plans of the petitioners, the whole of the wealth, commerce and property of the city of London would be diverted to another place, and a new city of London be established in opposition to the old one. He hoped therefore that the object of the petition would be fairly and deliberately examined, and at the same time assured the House that by the next session of Parliament, the city of London expected to be ready with such plans of improvement and accommodation as might remove the complaints of the merchants, and prevent the evils which the object of the petition, if carried into effect, was likely to produce.

Mr. Alderman ANDERSON enforced the same arguments against the object of the petition.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG hoped that while the members of the city of London were doing their duty, the House would not suffer any prepossession to take place. He said, that with regard to the sum which had been expended by the corporation, the benefit was in a great measure lost to the petitioners, whilst they were deprived of the proper conveniences for loading and unloading their goods. He stated, that at the ports of Liverpool and Hull, the merchants had entered into subscriptions similar to that of the petitioners, for forming wet docks, &c. which they found to be so materially conducive to their convenience and advantage. He

stated the inconveniencies which the West-India merchants had complained of in the port of London, and remarked that Liverpool was growing up in trade and rival opulence, solely from the convenience of its quays.

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON admitted that the complaints of the petitioners were well founded, for he had himself experienced some of the inconveniences, but all the claim of the city of London, in respect to the object of the petition, was simply this, the claim of preference. He had no doubt but the plans of the city of London, when prepared, would be commensurate to the necessity, and as the bill proposed involved a matter of serious consequence, and threatened to injure the interests of the corporation of the city, the House should be cautious how they suffered the corporation to be trenched upon, for if this were done in the present instance, it might be farther injurious by establishing a precedent in future.

Alderman LE MESURIER, in addition to what the other Aldermen had stated, observed, that there were certain privileges of the Borough of Southwark which would also be affected, if the bill proposed should pass into a law.

Sir WATKIN LEWES said, he wished to put the House on its guard, by stating the magnitude of the proposition attempted to be brought forward. With respect to the wet docks at Hull and Liverpool, the bill in those cases, did not go to dispossess the corporations of their privileges, whereas this petition went to divest the corporation of London of rights, which they had enjoyed from time immemorial; it made a direct attack on the immunities and privileges of the city. He therefore viewed the proposed bill as an object of very great magnitude, which deeply affected the corporation of London. He alledged that this petition, and the plan it proposed, went to injure and dispossess 1600 families, besides 10,000 labourers about the quays, &c. who would be thereby, in a great measure, deprived of their livelihood.

Mr. MANNING rose to observe, that out of the number of those immediately concerned, 1473 had already given their assent to the prayer of the petition, of whom 287 were owners, and 1186 were occupiers.

Sir W. YOUNG said, that however the corporation of the city, as a body, might consider themselves to be affected, he could not but regard this petition as containing much of the sense of the respectable inhabitants and leading interest of the commerce of the city of London; a great number of wealthy and respectable merchants were concerned in this petition, and he was persuaded that were it carried round from house to house, there would be a great majority

of the mercantile interest in its favour ; so that if there was an opposition on the present occasion, it was the opposition and the interest of the corporation of London, against the sense of a great majority of the commercial inhabitants of London.

The petition was then ordered to be referred to a Committee, consisting of the Attorney and Solicitor Generals, the Master of the Rolls, the members of the city and counties adjacent, the gentlemen of the long robe and merchants.

Mr. LECHMERE said, that on the first open day he should bring forward a motion on the present alarming high price of grain and provisions. After some conversation with the Speaker, Friday next was the day fixed upon.

Mr. ROSE brought in a bill for repealing the duties on legacies and estates, and granting other duties thereon. He said that from the general understanding on a former day of the propriety of having this bill well considered, he should move for the first reading of it now, the second on Wednesday next, then have it committed the day following, and the blanks filled up and printed, and afterwards to have it recommitted on some distant day.

Mr. MAURICE ROBINSON wished that the notice had not been given in so thin a House.

This bill was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday next.

Mr. GREY rose to beg leave to present a petition, which he held in his hand, and which was of a very extraordinary nature, inasmuch as it was signed by only one person. But when he informed the House that that person was no less than Sir Francis Blake, a person of the purest patriotism, and of tried integrity, he trusted there would be no uneasy apprehension with respect to its tendency. When it was recollected that the national burdens have risen to the most alarming amount, it would not surprise the House that a man of his disposition should turn his thoughts to the prevention of that evil which had often been foretold, but which now comes more immediately in prospect, a national bankruptcy. Our present situation called in a peculiar degree for some prudent intervention, since we had just seen that taxation could no longer be extended, for the bill that had been lately read, appeared to be one of the last of our resources. Some remedy was required to meet the uncontrollable profusion of Ministers, which had been more extravagant during the present war than in the most extravagant of all wars, the war with America, and the petitioner had attempted to suggest a plan for it. There certainly were many objections to the plan of the petition, some of which he could start himself ; but notwithstanding



he thought it entitled to the consideration of the House. It has been a repeated assertion, that the land of the kingdom pays all taxation, for commerce can shift it off and elude it a thousand ways, while land has no mode of evasion. This might be true in the infancy of commerce, but now it was matter of a little doubt.—When the Minister, however, had himself computed the rental of the landed property of the kingdom to be no more than twenty-five millions, while the annual taxes were equivalent, some inquiry ought to be made as to the state of the national finances. The House might probably recollect, that, some years ago, a person of the name of Hutchinson made an ingenious calculation upon this subject, asserting that there was no public debt, for it was the debt of individuals, who might each discharge his share, and, in lieu of taxes, proposed that each should make a contribution for its discharge.—The petitioner had taken up this idea, and acted upon the same plan. As to the general object of the expenditure, and the necessity of interposing some check to it, the safety of the country demanded that it should no longer be delayed. He had waited three or four days for the attendance of some of the Ministers before he presented this petition, and he now presented it to his regret, when there was only a single Minister in the House.

The petition was read as follows :

To the House of Commons.

The humble Petition of Sir Francis Blake, Bart.

Sheweth

That the petitioner may be permitted, by the House, to sketch for their consideration the outline of an arrangement, which takes for its aim the political salvation of this country, the happiness of the community at large, and of every individual; and which proposes to work its effect by means which are apparently both easy, certain, safe, and honourable: and the petitioner farther prayeth, that it may be permitted him to state to the House, for the purpose of their more ready determination, the reasons which have influenced him to suppose the arrangement in question to be fraught with the benefits suggested by him; which are briefly as follow—That, from sources of information the best within his reach, it has appeared to the complete satisfaction of the petitioner, that trade is not an object which, by any possible human contrivance, can be made amenable to the payment of any tax that can affect the parties concerned in its management, inasmuch as the parties so concerned can always contrive to relieve themselves by shifting the weight, which in that case must ultimately and principally fall upon the proprietors of land, who have no such means of shifting the weight: that uniformly, as the trade of the nation has more or less flourished, the territorial rental has, in like manner and in some such proportion, been observed to advance. That in the year 1600, the territorial rental did not exceed six millions per annum: that from the year 1600 to 1688, under all the difficulties and distresses of the intervening space, the trade of the country increased, and the rental advanced from six to fourteen millions per annum—computing therefore, by the vast in-

crease of trade from the period last named to the present time, comprizing a series of years for the most part favourable, the final result must be, that the present rental cannot reasonably be supposed to fall short of 50 millions per annum; which led of course to the following conclusions—that the way to advance the land is to give every possible encouragement to trade—that the way to depress the land is to burthen trade—that to burthen trade is, in effect, to burthen land, besides depressing it.—Taking, therefore, the present territorial rental at fifty millions per annum—the funded rental at ten millions—the two together at sixty millions per annum—the present payments to Government at fifteen millions per annum—the pressure of those payments on the rental named, authorized by general acknowledgement, at fifteen shillings in the pound—the petitioner proceeded to reason upon those data, as follows: if it be true that the territorial and funded rental is sixty millions per annum—then it is true also, that five shillings in the pound on such rental will raise a revenue of fifteen millions per annum: if it is true, that we now pay at the rate of fifteen shillings in the pound to raise a revenue of fifteen millions—then is it also true, that the trading part of the nation can always contrive to create for themselves an exemption from state burthens—then is it true also, that the landed and funded proprietors are, and have all along, to their irreparable loss, been the principal, if not the sole, paymasters of all imposts, and, consequently, that little or no injury will be done to that body of men, but that great and lasting advantage will accrue to them and to their posterity, by changing the mode, as here proposed, of collecting the revenue. The petitioner therefore prays, that he may be permitted and authorized to charge his real estates with the payment of 30,000*l.* or with the payment of such other sum, be the same more or less, as may be ascertained by the House to be his proportionate share of the public debt to be parcelled out for payment among the several proprietors of lands, mines, waters, tythes, rents in any way arising therefrom, monies so secured and public funds: and the petitioner farther prays, that his said estates may be made subject to the payment of interest on the sum to be so charged, as above, at the rate of 4*l.* per cent. or any other rate or interest, be the same more or less, which may appear to the House to be his proportionate share of the annual charge of the said public debt, supposing the same to be transferred as aforesaid: and the petitioner farther prays, that he may be permitted and authorized to pay, in future, his proportionate share of the civil list and peace establishment by an annual pound rate, the quantum of which pound rate to be ascertained by the House in like manner as before has been named: and the petitioner farther prays, that as often as the exigencies of government may require a farther aid, he may be permitted and authorized to pay his proportionate share of the same by such an additional pound rate as may be ascertained by the House, to be sufficient to accumulate the sum which would fall to his lot of payment, supposing the whole annual supply to be raised within the year, and parcelled out for payment among the several proprietors aforesaid: and the petitioner farther prays, that he may be permitted and authorized to make such temporary and such permanent payments, as have been severally named and assented to on his part, by half yearly instalments, and that the same may be declared to be accepted in full satisfaction of his proportionate share of all taxes, customs, duties, and parliamentary imposts, laid already, or which hereafter may be laid, on the subjects of this country, or their concerns.

Ordered to lie upon the table.

The Marine Mutiny bill was read a third time and passed.

Sir ROBERT SALISBURY wished to know of the honourable gentleman who had given notice before the recess that he intended to propose a tax upon dogs, whether he intended to bring that subject forward?

Mr. DENT said he had that intention, and that he should propose it in the next Committee of Ways and Means, unless he should have the Minister's assurance that he himself was determined to propose it early in the next session of Parliament, in which case he should give it up under a conviction of its being likely to be more effectual than if it came from him. The idea he had of this tax was, that it should be appropriated solely to the relief of the poor.

After a few words the business ended for the present.

Some private business being afterwards gone through, the House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 9th February.*

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH brought up the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the circumstances of the late loan, which was ordered to be printed. Mr. Smith hoped that it might be printed on Thursday or Friday, as he intended, in the course of next week, to make a motion on the same,

General SMITH rose to state to the House a motion which he would then submit, respecting the barrack returns. He saw the name of General De Lancey to the accounts of forty-four different barracks; but the manner in which the expences were applied was not specified. General Smith was proceeding at large against such a mode of furnishing accounts, when

The SPEAKER informed him that he was irregular in making a preamble to his motion.

Upon which he moved, "That there be laid before the House, an account of the number of infantry and cavalry, for which the different barracks were provided."

Mr. GREY wished to know from the Secretary at War, when the farther extraordinaries of the army, which were called for previous to the recess, would be furnished to the House? as he intended, if he did not get a satisfactory answer, to make the following motion, which embraced the whole of the question on which he wanted information: "That there be laid before the House, estimates of the ground rents of grounds on which barracks have been built—of the yearly rents of buildings occupied as barracks—and of the monies expended in the purchase of grounds for the farther erection of

barracks." And he hoped that the same delay would not accompany the production of this which had attended the former accounts.

The SECRETARY AT WAR replied, that he believed the accounts which the honourable gentleman called for, were to be found either in those furnished to the House, or in other accounts now about to be furnished. He was certain that General De Lancey had it in his power to give regular returns of the expences of the barracks already built and occupied; and this, he presumed, was the case. It was true, Government had it in contemplation to build more barracks; but they had not yet determined to what extent. When this point should be settled, the accounts could be submitted with precision, till then there could be no precise calculation.

Mr. GREY observed, that he consented to withdraw his motion, on account of the right honourable Secretary's statement, though he was not at all satisfied with the information he received. He could not forbear expressing his astonishment, that Government should be proceeding on a scale of undefined expences, in prosecuting an object which in any times but the present, would have been contemplated with jealousy and horror. He did not mean now to enter upon the argument, as the subject would, in a short time, undergo a full and serious parliamentary discussion, when he hoped that the House would express their detestation of a system which had been adopted without their consent, which had involved the country in an immense expenditure, without their concurrence, and which had been reprobated in all good times of the Constitution. It was an alarming circumstance to see 1,158,000*l.* laid out already in this business; and still more to see Administration going on in a plan of undefined expence. Where were they to stop? He wished again to ask the right honourable Secretary when Ministers would have their minds made up—when he could furnish estimates of those barracks to be built?

Mr. WINDHAM said, that he could not fix any particular time; he had before said all he could say on the subject. The honourable gentleman might call their building more barracks an indefinite intention perhaps, as they had not their minds made up; but they merely were ~~undetermined~~ determined as to the number. They had no idea of an indefinite erection of barracks, as the honourable gentleman seemed to argue.

The motion was then withdrawn.

The SECRETARY AT WAR brought up a paper, containing a list of the late promotions of Officers in India, which was ordered to lie upon the table.

adopted. In the times of Charles II. it was said, that Lord Clarendon was confirmed in his love for the Constitution, by a very remarkable circumstance. When he began to study the laws of his country, his father, after laying down some maxims which he recommended as proper for him, to conform to in his political conduct, immediately expired. The present Minister might have learned patriotism from a similar occurrence in the history of his illustrious father, who, after attempting to make a great effort in behalf of his country, dropped down, and never after appeared in public. He brought forward his motion with some precipitation, he said, because he understood that there was a probability of prosecuting the war for another campaign at least, and that for the purpose of aiding this prosecution, another loan was to be negotiated for the Emperor in this country, and he wished to have the Members of that House decide upon the question with unbiassed minds, so that the Public might have no ground to imagine they were interested in that negotiation. Though urged by an impulse of duty to this undertaking, he found himself so embarrassed, as to be unable to discharge it in the manner he wished, and therefore not to intrude any longer on the time and patience of the House, he concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill to prevent any Member of the House of Commons from having any share in a contract, commission, or agreement for a foreign loan.

Mr. GREY seconded the motion.

Mr. Chancellor PITT did not feel himself called upon to trouble the House much at length on the present occasion. There were two points of view in which the subject had been considered by the honourable gentleman; the first of which was, that foreign loans were improper means of prosecuting the war. But as all foreign loans must necessarily come directly under the discussion of the House before they could be granted, he saw no necessity to anticipate the effect of that discussion. The other view in which he considered the subject, that foreign loans were means of ministerial influence, seemed to him to be equally inconclusive as to the object of his motion. For when the report on a late loan came under discussion, which would shortly be the case, they would have an opportunity of deciding how far the negotiation of loans were converted by the present Administration into instruments of corruption. All that he would say now was, that foreign loans were not more liable to be abused in that way, than domestic loans; and why Parliament should pass any act to encumber the negotiation of a foreign loan in future, when perhaps it would be much for the interest of the country that such a loan should be granted, he was com-

pletely at a loss to discover. He believed it would be difficult to prevent Members of Parliament from purchasing scrip if they pleased, after any loan was guaranteed by Parliament, and therefore conceived the whole of the honourable gentleman's motion to be useless. On these grounds he had not the smallest difficulty in giving a decided negative to the present motion.

Mr. M. ROBINSON explained, that he did not mean generally to oppose all means of carrying on the war, but that he disapproved, at all times, of a war being carried on by this country in any other way than by sea, a warfare which continental loans were by no means calculated to encourage.

Mr. FOX found no difficulty in giving his assent to the motion of the honourable gentleman, though it were on no other grounds than the impolicy of carrying on the war by means of foreign loans; for he had no difficulty in saying, that this country ought never to assist a foreign potentate by way of loan, because it was risking, not only for ourselves, but for our posterity, a great pecuniary loss, for which it was impossible at present, for us to provide. He had once been the supporter of a bill to prohibit contractors from sitting in Parliament. Then, it was thought wise, on account of the financial embarrassments of the country, to make an exception in favour of those who advanced their money for the public service, in any domestic loans. But the principle of this exception never could extend to contractors for foreign loans, because the object was not of equal public importance. The right honourable gentleman opposite to him (Mr. Pitt) said, let us argue the question, when the propriety of granting a foreign loan comes under discussion. But what was the argument of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Robinson), let us decide upon it now, while every gentleman in the House is uninfluenced by personal consideration; let us come to a decision now, before we are biased by motives by which it is easy for the judgment to be misled. But, said the Chancellor of the Exchequer, we shall have the subject soon under discussion when the House came to consider the Report of the Committee on the late loan. That Report he hoped would undergo ample and serious discussion; and when it comes to be discussed, said Mr. Fox, we must not only not be men, but we must be children, if we can suppose that so great advantage can be derived by any individuals from a public loan as has certainly accrued to certain individuals from the late loan, without the possibility of this advantage being converted into an instrument of parliamentary corruption.—And if this was the case in domestic loans, what caution ought to be exercised by the House when they found it necessary to vote away

foreign loans ? If they could bring themselves to believe that there were any circumstances in which it would be for the national interest to grant such loans, ought they not to make every provision to secure their own integrity of principle, to take the expediency of granting them unbiassedly under consideration, and to shew the public that they never would allow private and personal views to interfere with those disinterested and patriotic motives, which ought at all times to regulate their public conduct ?

The House divided, Ayes — 19

Noes, — 70

Majority — 51

Adjourned.

*Friday, February 12.*

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON moved for leave to bring in a bill for the better recovery of small debts within the city of London.

Mr. JEKYLL said, that on a former occasion he had taken an opportunity to state his objections to a bill of a similar nature with the present, which had been thrown out. Now when he saw a bill of the same tendency introduced, he should have expected to have been apprised of the design by the worthy Alderman, as he had pledged himself to oppose the measure if revived. The bill went to extend the jurisdiction of courts of conscience, which formerly were confined to suits for debts under 40s. In his opinion they went materially to infringe the rights of juries, and the House ought to be well assured of its necessity before they gave it their approbation. There were already courts of law in London, with a jury, where such matters might be decided. It was complained that proceedings in these courts were expensive, but the question was not how cheaply but how well justice was administered ? He was informed however that the fact was the reverse. He did not mean to detract from the commissioners, to whom the right of judging in these cases was to be transferred, but he was certain they were not professional men. Yet in questions to the extent of 51. was it not probable that legal points would arise, which the commissioners were not competent to determine ? He did not impute any blame to the worthy Alderman ; nor did he suspect any improper motives in bringing forward the bill. He thought, however, that it was carrying from a court, which had the assistance of a jury, matters that could be very properly decided by it, to another where the advantage of a jury was wanting, and where they could not so



well be investigated. He would therefore oppose the bill in every stage.

Alderman LUSHINGTON said the honourable and learned gentleman would find that many of his objections were removed by the present bill. When the courts of Conscience were first instituted, the sum of 40s. was much greater than 5l. now, and it was only agreeably to the original spirit and design of the institution that their authority was now to be extended. He highly respected the rights of juries, and no man could ascribe to him any wish to abridge their power.

Leave granted to bring in the bill.

Mr. LECHMERE said that he had intended to bring forward certain motions relative to the high price of corn, which he believed would come better in the Committee of the whole House on this subject, which stood for Monday. As he understood that Monday would be dedicated to important public discussions, he would move that the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, on the high price of corn, on Monday, should be discharged, and renewed for Tuesday.

Agreed to.

The House resolved itself into a preparatory Committee, in which leave was given to bring in a bill for regulating the carrying of slaves; and the House being resumed, the report was received, and leave granted to bring in the bill.

The order of the day for the second reading of a bill for regulating the wages of labourers being read, Mr. WHITBREAD, jun. rose and said, that so considerable a period had intervened since the first reading and printing of the present bill, that he could labour under no imputation of a desire to hurry it precipitately through the House. Ample room had been given for members to consider maturely its object and regulations, and to collect from their constituents such information as they might require. He hoped that gentlemen had improved the opportunity which this interval had offered for that purpose. For his own part, from some unfortunate private circumstances, he had not made such an extensive investigation of the subject as he could have wished; but every step which he had taken, and every inquiry that he had instituted, convinced him of the necessity of remedying the present grievances of the industrious poor by some legislative provisions. Whether those which he had suggested were the most proper to be adopted, was a question which he submitted to the decision of the House? Having bestowed considerable pains and attention in drawing up the bill, he might have left it for their consideration and determination upon its merits

alone, did not the necessity of the subject, and the apparent novelty of the measure, demand a few words in explanation, and they should be but few. He felt as much as any man how greatly it was to be desired that legislative interference in matters of this nature should be abolished, and the price of labour, like every other commodity, be left to find its own level. From reasonings upon the subject, the result was, that it always would find its level; but the deductions of reason were confuted by experience; for he appealed to the sense of the House, whether the situation of the labouring poor in this country was such as any feeling or liberal mind would wish? He did not mean that the wages of the labourers were inadequate for his subsistence and comfort in times of temporary scarcity and unusual hardship; but even at the period preceding this distress the evil likewise prevailed. In most parts of the country, the labourer had long been struggling with increasing misery, till the pressure had risen to a height almost too grievous to be endured, while the patience of the sufferers under their accumulated distresses had been conspicuous and exemplary. And did not such distress, supported with so much fortitude, merit relief from the Legislature of the country? Were it necessary to refer to any authority, he could quote the writings of Dr. Price, in which he shews, that in the course of two centuries, the price of labour had not increased in the rate of more than three or four times, whereas the price of meat had increased in the proportion of six or seven times; and that of cloathing, no less than fourteen or fifteen times in that period. The poor's rates too had increased since the beginning of the century from 600,000*l.* at which they were estimated, to upwards of three millions. Nor was this prodigious increase in the poor's rates to be ascribed to the advance of population, for it was doubtful whether in fact any such increase had taken place. At the present period the contrary seemed to be the case. By the pressure of the times, marriage was discouraged; and, in the domestic circle, among the laborious classes of the community, the birth of a child, instead of being hailed as a blessing, was considered as a curse. For this serious and alarming evil a remedy was required, and to this was the bill in question directed. It is my wish, said Mr. Whitbread, to rescue the labouring poor from a state of slavish dependance, to enable the husbandman, who dedicates his days to incessant toil, to feed, to clothe, and lodge his family with some degree of comfort, to exempt the youth of this country from the necessity of entering into the army or the navy, and from flocking to great towns for subsistence; to prevent the mechanic from considering the birth of a child as a family curse; and to put it in the power of him who

ploughs and sows and threshes the corn, to taste of the fruits of his industry, by giving him a right to a part of the produce of his labour. Such were the grounds upon which the bill in question was built, and by which it was recommended to the House. To those who dreaded every thing which wore the aspect of innovation, and who reprobated every measure that was new, he would say, that here was no departure from established precedents, or introduction of unknown principles. The statute of the 5th of Elizabeth, was enacted expressly for the purpose of regulating the price of labour. This statute was acted upon for forty years, when it was afterwards amended by a subsequent one in the reign of James the first, bearing a similar title. He would not be understood as commending the principle of these statutes; on the contrary he was of opinion, that they operated as a clog to industry, by permitting Justices to fix the maximum of labour. But even as late as the 8th of George the third, Justices were empowered to regulate the wages of taylors, and even now the Lord Mayor and council of London control the rate of the silk-weavers' wages. He mentioned these as precedents, merely to shew that the price of labour has, in different cases, been already regulated by Legislative provisions. To those who were afraid of entrusting Justices with the power with which they would be invested by the provisions of the present bill, he should only say, that he left the power where he found it. At present they were possessed of the power to oppress the labourer, and this bill only invested them with the additional power to redress his grievances. By fixing the minimum of the wages of labour, a comfortable subsistence was secured to industry, and at the same time greater exertions were prompted by the hope of greater reward. To some, perhaps, the time of bringing this subject forward might appear exceptionable. There were those who would say, if the labourers were not distressed, why agitate a question for which no necessity calls, and awaken desires which are not felt? others would maintain that it was unseasonable to direct the public attention to such a subject, while the pressure of distress might excite discontents, or raise unreasonable expectations.—To these he could only answer, that he was not one who could see wise and salutary measures sacrificed to a pretended inconvenience in the circumstances of the times; and that he was of opinion that what was proper to be done could never be done out of season. If any material objections were afterwards urged against the bill, he might avail himself of the indulgence allowed to the person who makes a motion, and reply to the best of his ability. He concluded with moving, "That the bill be now read a second time."

Mr. HONEYWOOD seconded the motion.

Mr. Chancellor PITT not observing that gentlemen were prepared to deliver their sentiments on the present bill, could not give a silent vote upon a question of so much importance, and at the same time of so much delicacy. In the interval which had taken place since the first reading of the bill, he had paid considerable attention to the subject, and endeavoured to collect information from the best sources to which he had access. The evil was certainly of such a nature as to render it of importance to find out a proper remedy; but the nature of the remedy involved discussions of such a delicate and intricate nature, that none should be adopted without being maturely weighed. The present situation of the labouring poor in this country, was certainly not such as could be wished, upon any principle, either of humanity or policy. That class had of late been exposed to hardships which they all concurred in lamenting, and were equally actuated by a desire to remove. He would not argue how far the comparison of the state of the labourer, relieved as it has been by a display of beneficence never surpassed at any period, with the state of this class of the community in former times, was just, though he was convinced that the representations were exaggerated. At any rate the comparisons were not accurate, because they did not embrace a comprehensive view of the relative situations. He gave Mr. Whitbread ample credit for his good intentions in bringing the present bill into Parliament, though he was afraid that its provisions were such as it would be impolitic, upon the whole, to adopt; and though they were adopted, he believed that they would be found to be inadequate to the purposes which they proposed.—The authority of a very eminent calculator, Dr. Price, had been adduced to shew the great advance that had taken place on every article of subsistence, compared with the slow increase of the wages of labour. But the statement of Dr. Price was erroneous, as he compared the earnings of the labourer at the period when the comparison is instituted, with the price of provisions, and the earnings of the labourer at the present day, with the price of the same articles, without adverting to the change of circumstances, and to the difference of provisions. Corn, which was then almost the only food of the labourer, was now supplied by cheaper substitutions, and it was unfair to conclude that the wages of labour were so far from keeping pace with the price of provisions, because they could no longer purchase the same quantity of an article, for which the labourer had no longer the same demand. The simple question now to be considered was, whether the remedy for the evil, which was admitted in a certain extent to exist, was to be obtained by

giving to the Justices the power to regulate the price of labour, and by endeavouring to establish by authority, what would be much better accomplished by the unassisted operation of principles? It was unnecessary to argue the general expediency of any Legislative interference, as the principles had been perfectly recognized by the honourable gentleman himself. The most celebrated writers upon political economy, and the experience of those states where arts had flourished the most, bore ample testimony of their truth. They had only to inquire, therefore, whether the present case was strong enough for the exception, and whether the means proposed were suited to the object intended? The honourable gentleman imagined that he had on his side of the question the support of experience in this country, and appealed to certain laws upon the statute book, in confirmation of his proposition. He did not find himself called upon to defend the principle of these statutes, but they were certainly introduced for purposes widely different from the object of the present bill. They were enacted to guard the industry of the country from being checked by a general combination among labourers; and the bill now under consideration, was introduced solely for the purpose of remedying the inconveniences which labourers sustain from the disproportion existing between the price of labour, and the price of living. He had the satisfaction to hear the honourable gentleman acknowledge, that if the price of labour could be made to find its own level, it would be much more desirable than to affect it by arbitrary statute, which in the execution was liable to abuse on the one hand, and inefficacy on the other. If the remedy succeeded according to the most sanguine expectations, it only established what would have been better effected by principle; and if it failed on the one hand it might produce the severest oppression, and on the other encourage the most profligate idleness and extravagance. Was it not better for the House then to consider the operation of general principles, and rely upon the effects of their unconfined exercise? Was it not wiser to reflect what remedy might be adopted, at once more general in its principles, and more comprehensive in its object, less exceptionable in its example, and less dangerous in its application? They should look to the instances where interference had shackled industry, and where the best intentions have often produced the most pernicious effects. It was indeed the most absurd bigotry in asserting the general principle, to exclude the exception; but trade, industry, and barter would always find their own level, and be impeded by regulations which violated their natural operation, and deranged their proper effect. This being granted, then he appealed to the judgment of the House,

whether it was better to refer the matter entirely to the discretion of a magistrate, or to endeavour to find out the causes of the evil, and by removing the causes, to apply a remedy more justifiable in its principle, more easy in the execution, more effectual in its operations, in fine, more consonant to every maxim of sound and rational policy. The evil, in his opinion, originated, in a great measure, in the abuses which had crept into the poor laws of this country, and the complicated mode of executing them. The poor laws of this country, however wise in their original institution, had contributed to fetter the circulation of labour, and to substitute a system of abuses, in room of the evils which they humanely meant to redress, and by engrafting upon a defective plan, defective remedies produced nothing but confusion and disorder. The laws of settlements prevented the workman from going to that market where he could dispose of his industry to the greatest advantage, and the capitalist, from employing the person who was qualified to procure him the best returns for his advances. These laws had at once increased the burdens of the poor, and taken from the collective resources of the state, to supply wants which their operation had occasioned, and to alleviate a poverty which they tended to perpetuate. Such were the institutions which misguided benevolence had introduced, and with such warnings to deter, it would be wise to distrust a similar mode of conduct, and to endeavour to discover remedies of a different nature. The country had not yet experienced the full benefit of the laws that had already been passed, to correct the errors which he had explained. From the attention he had bestowed upon the subject, and from the inquiries he had been able to make of others, he was disposed to think we had not gone yet far enough, and to entertain an opinion that many advantages might be derived, and much of the evil now complained of removed, by an extension of those reformatations in the poor laws which had been begun. The encouragement of friendly societies would contribute to alleviate that immense charge with which the public was loaded in the support of the poor, and provide by savings of industry for the comfort of distress. Now the parish officer could not remove the workman, merely because he apprehended he might be burdensome, but it was necessary that he should be actually chargeable. But from the pressure of a temporary distress, might the industrious mechanic be transported from the place where his exertions could be useful to himself and his family, to a quarter where he would become a burden without the capacity of being even able to provide for himself. To remedy such a great striking grievance, the laws of settlement ought to undergo a radical amendment.

He conceived, that to promote the free circulation of labour, to remove the obstacles by which industry is prohibited from availing itself of its resources, would go far to remedy the evils, and diminish the necessity of applying for relief to the poor's rates. In the course of a few years, this freedom, from the vexatious restraint which the laws imposed, would supersede the object of their institutions. The advantages would be widely diffused, the wealth of the nation would be increased, the poor man rendered not only more comfortable but more virtuous, and the weight of poor's rates, with which the landed interest is loaded, greatly diminished. He should wish, therefore, that an opportunity were given of restoring the original purity of the poor laws, and of removing those corruptions by which they had been obscured. He was convinced, that the evils which they had occasioned did not arise out of their original constitution, but coincided with the opinion of Blackstone, that in proportion as the wise regulations that were established in the long and glorious reign of Queen Elizabeth, have been superseded by subsequent enactments, the utility of the institution has been impaired, and the benevolence of the plan rendered fruitless.

While he thus had expressed those sentiments which the discussion naturally prompted, it might not perhaps, be improper, on such an occasion, to lay before the House the ideas floating in his mind, though not digested with sufficient accuracy, nor arranged with a proper degree of clearness. Neither what the honourable gentleman proposed, nor what he himself had suggested, were remedies adequate to the evil it was intended to remove. Supposing, however, the two modes of remedying the evil were on a par in effect, the preference in principle was clearly due to that which was least arbitrary in its nature, but it was not difficult to perceive that the remedy proposed by the honourable gentleman would either be completely ineffectual, or such as far to over-reach its mark. As there was a difference in the numbers which compose the families of the labouring poor, it must necessarily require more to support a small family. Now by the regulations proposed, either the man with a small family would have too much wages, or the man with a large family who had done most service to his country, would have too little. So that were the minimum fixed upon the standard of a large family, it might operate as an encouragement to idleness on one part of the community; and if it were fixed on the standard of a small family, those would not enjoy the benefit of it, for whose relief it was intended. What measure then could be found to supply the defect. Let us, said he, make relief in cases, where there are a number of children a matter of right, and an honour

instead of a ground for opprobrium and contempt. This will make a large family a blessing, and not a curse; and this will draw a proper line of distinction between those who are able to provide for themselves by their labour, and those who, after having enriched their country with a number of children, have a claim upon its assistance for their support. All this, however, he would confess, was not enough, if they did not engraft upon it resolutions to discourage relief where it was not wanted. If such means could be practised as that of supplying the necessities of those who required assistance by giving it in labour or affording employment, which is the principle of the act of Queen Elizabeth, the most important advantages would be gained. They would thus benefit those to whom they afforded relief, not only by the assistance bestowed, but by giving habits of industry and frugality, and in furnishing a temporary bounty, enable them to make permanent provision for themselves. By giving effect to the operation of friendly societies, individuals would be rescued from becoming a burden upon the Public, and, if necessary, be enabled to subsist upon a fund which their own industry contributed to raise. These great points of granting relief according to the number of children, preventing removals at the caprice of the parish officer, and making them subscribe to friendly societies, would tend in a very great degree to remove every complaint to which the present partial remedy could be applied.— Experience had already shewn how much could be done by the industry of children, and the advantages of early employing them in such branches of manufactures as they are capable to execute. The extension of schools of industry was also an object of material importance. If any one would take the trouble to compute the amount of all the earnings of the children who are already educated in this manner, he would be surprised, when he came to consider the weight which their support by their own labours took off the country, and the addition which, by the fruits of their toil, and the habits to which they were formed, was made to its internal opulence. The suggestion of these schools was originally drawn from Lord Hale and Mr. Locke, and upon such authority he had no difficulty in recommending the plan to the encouragement of the Legislature. Much might be effected by a plan of this nature susceptible of constant improvement. Such a plan would convert the relief granted to the poor into an encouragement to industry, instead of being, as it is by the present poor laws, a premium to idleness, and a school for sloth. There were also a number of subordinate circumstances, to which it was necessary to attend. The law which prohibits giving relief where any visible property remains should be



abolished. That degrading condition should be withdrawn. No temporary occasion should force a British subject to part with the last shilling of his little capital, and compel him to descend to a state of wretchedness from which he could never recover, merely that he might be entitled to a casual supply. Such little sums might be advanced as might put the persons who received them in the way of acquiring what might place them in a situation to make permanent provision for themselves. These were the general ideas which had occurred to him upon the subject; if they should be approved of by any gentleman in the House, they might perhaps appear at a future time in a more accurate shape than he could pretend to give them. He could not, however, let this opportunity slip without throwing them out. He was aware that they would require to be very maturely considered. He was aware also of a fundamental difficulty, that of insuring the diligent execution of any law that should be enacted. This could only be done by presenting to those who should be intrusted with the execution motives to emulation, and by a frequent inspection of their conduct as to diligence and fidelity. Were he to suggest an outline, it would be this. To provide some new mode of inspection by parishes, or by hundreds—to report to the Magistrates at the Petty Sessions, with a liberty of appeal from them to the General Quarter Sessions, where the Justice should be empowered to take cognizance of the conduct of the different commissioners, and to remedy whatever defects should be found to exist. That an annual report should be made to Parliament, and that Parliament should impose upon itself the duty of tracing the effect of its system from year to year, till it should be fully matured. That there should be a standing order of the House for this purpose, and in a word, that there should be an annual budget opened, containing the details of the whole system of poor laws, by which the Legislature would shew, that they had a constant and a watchful eye upon the interests of the poorest and most neglected part of the community. Mr. Pitt concluded an excellent speech with acknowledging, that he was not vain enough to think that he had brought forward any new idea, adding, however, that those which he had suggested, were collected from the best sources of information, from a careful examination of the subject, and an extensive survey of the opinions of others. He would only say, that it was a subject of the utmost importance, and that he would do every thing in his power to bring forward or promote such measures as would conduce to the interest of the country.

Mr. LECHMERE felt it impossible to give a silent vote upon this occasion, because the bill, in his opinion, was not only founded

upon humanity, but policy also; and the late alarming scarcity of provisions, he thought, ought to induce every man who wished to encourage the industrious poor, to promote every plan of relief for them at such a crisis. No man among the agricultural labourers could at present support himself and his family with comfort; for a barley loaf is at the enormous price of twelvepence-halfpenny, while the whole of the labourer's daily wages amount to no more than one shilling. As to the various acts of unheard-of beneficence which the right honourable gentleman had boasted of during this temporary calamity, he knew nothing of them, since, unhappily, the labouring poor in his neighbourhood had not experienced their blessed effects. By the exorbitant price of meat, which he attributed rather to an unprincipled monopoly than any material scarcity of that article, the poor were unable to purchase it, else they might possibly make use of an inferior sort of bread, which might be obtained at a cheaper rate, but it would be less nutritious in its quality also, and therefore not sufficient sustenance alone. In his part of the country, he repeated, that it was impossible for a poor man to live, though an honourable gentleman (Mr. Burdon), upon a former evening, asserted, that the contrary was the case in his part of the country, where the poor not only lived contentedly, but well. This, however, was the effect of the contributions of the rich and the benevolent, and, as had been quoted on the occasion,

“ *Haud ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco,*”

It was a noble sentiment, and he applauded him for it, but yet he would rather have the labourer enjoy the honest fruits of his industry, than be obliged to receive his due as an eleemosynary gift. It appeared to him extremely necessary; that the minimum of agricultural labour should at least be fixed; not but that he wished equally well to the manufacturer and artificer, but he thought their situation called less for the interference of Parliament than the other. Upon these principles he gave his assent to the second reading of the bill, because it tended to make the poor man happier.

Mr. BUXTON said, after the able and comprehensive speech of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), he should not presume to trouble the House much. If the plan of the honourable gentleman opposite were to do no more good than having drawn forth a variety of observations so fraught with sound policy, liberal argument, and a general view of such an important and complex subject, as that speech of the right honourable gentleman, he should assert that it had done a great deal, and that the right honourable gentleman was not only entitled to the thanks of that House, but of

his country for it. Farther than that he was free to confess that the bill did not appear likely to be of much service, for if the price of labour were to be fixed by the Justices of Peace, according to the regulations there proposed, he feared that many labouring and industrious people would be entirely thrown out of employ, and become a burden to their respective parishes. Some of the people he alluded to were those who by sickness or old age are rendered incapable of doing so much as a common labourer, and who would consequently be rejected for younger persons, and persons of more strength and activity, and more healthy constitutions. Another class of people which would be much injured by it were the linen weavers, who, in the laxity of employment in that manufacture, turn their attention to agricultural labour, and are employed by farmers to do an inferior kind of work, where a regular labourer can be more usefully employed. These people can earn but a shilling per day, when a regular labourer earns eighteen-pence, and consequently if their wages were to be equalized, they would be dismissed. When the honourable gentleman (Mr. Lechmere) said that he had not seen any of those unheard of acts of beneficence which the right honourable gentleman near him had so highly and so properly extolled, he regretted that he lived in a different part of the country than that from which he himself came, as there the farmers and neighbouring gentry had voluntarily entered into the most liberal subscriptions for the relief of the labouring poor, which did them immortal honour. In regard to the objects and tendency of the present bill, he said that at Christmas he consulted with various well-informed farmers and gentlemen in their meetings at Norwich, and they all unanimously concurred in their opinions, that if it were passed into a law, it would be injurious, and therefore he should give his negative to the second reading.

Sir THOMAS COXHEAD said, he felt infinite satisfaction, in common with every member in that House, at what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose whole attention, it could not be denied, was ever directed to the public good. He chiefly rose to do away any misrepresentation from the assertion of an honourable gentleman, that he had not witnessed any of the unheard-of acts of beneficence, which the right honourable gentleman opposite him had so worthily praised, in his part of the country. If the honourable gentleman meant Worcester-shire, as he presumed he did, he was bound to inform the House and the public, that the farmers and gentry in that county had been as active, generous, and liberal in their relief of the labouring poor as in any other part of the kingdom whatever.

Mr. LECHMERE explained.

Mr. VANSITTART commended the honourable gentleman who introduced the bill, for his humane intentions, but declared that he had no hesitation in voting against it, because he thought any arbitrary regulations of the Justices of the Peace, in the price of labour, would be a greater evil than that already complained of. He was of opinion, if the magistrates were empowered to fix the price of labour, that the situation of the labouring man would be worse, and not better. The bill appeared to him, in every view, unnecessary, as the law since the reign of James the first, enabled the magistrate to fix the price of labour.

Mr. BURDON did not apprehend that the industrious poor were in that wretched situation stated by some gentlemen. The industrious labourer, in many instances, was able to support his family, and lay up something for his old age. From the average price of labour for some years, the House must perceive, that the wages of the labourer were considerably increased. They were the most useful class of men, and should be an object of peculiar care, and he could not but express his admiration at the clear and perspicuous manner in which Mr. Chancellor Pitt had delivered his sentiments on the subject. The friendly societies, he observed, if they continued to extend, would be productive of infinite good. He mentioned one of those societies, which had adopted the praiseworthy plan to lend a man of character and industry small sums, to the extent of ten or fifteen pounds, in order to assist him in the way of his business. As to the bill before the House, he was convinced of its inadequacy to correct the abuses of which it complained. He thought any attempt to renew the obsolete regulations of Elizabeth in this case inapplicable, and recommended rather to repeal the act of Elizabeth than set it up as a precedent to act upon.

Mr. EDWARDS approved of the motion, and was of opinion that the bill should go into a Committee, where some clauses might be omitted and others added. At all events, the agitating the question, had called forth the attention of Mr. Chancellor Pitt, and whatever advantages it might derive from him or any other quarter, the honourable gentleman who made the motion, was intitled to every praise from his country on the occasion.

Mr. FOX.—I do not mean to trouble the House at any length on the present occasion. I only wish in a few words to account why the vote I shall this night give in favour of the bill is not agreeable to the general principle, by which I am guided in such discussions. There is no man less friendly to any system of compulsion than I or less desirous of calling in legislative interference, where other

means can be had of redressing an evil. . But the question now is not on the general principle, but on that particular state of the law, which renders some measure necessary to be adopted for the relief of the labouring poor.—While the law, as it stands, is saddled with so much restrictions, I approve of the bill proposed by my honourable friend, as calculated to correct that which is bad in its present operation, and to secure at least to the labourer the means of partial relief. But if the House object to the measure as improper, if they are of opinion that it is not the most judicious or desirable which may be applied, under all the circumstances of the case, I hope that they will go to the root of the evil, and provide some remedy adequate to the extent of the grievance. If, therefore, they shall give a negative to the second reading of the bill, I shall consider that by so doing they pledge themselves to take the subject into their early and most serious consideration. And however eligible the proposition of my honourable friend may be, I am convinced that if what he has brought forward shall induce the House to go into a full examination of the subject, and to provide a remedy commensurate to the evil, he will not only have accomplished his own benevolent intentions, but will have done a much greater service to the country, than even if the bill which he has now brought forward should be adopted.

Mr. WHITBREAD.—I cannot but congratulate the House on the able and eloquent speech which has been delivered by the right honourable gentleman on the subject, which it has fallen to me to introduce to their notice. It was undoubtedly a speech supported by much ability, and embellished with as much eloquence as the subject could admit. But at the same time I must remark, that if the poor laws had actually been such, as the right honourable gentleman had stated that they ought to be, it would not have been necessary for me to have brought forward the proposition, which I am afraid that facts and experience will be found undeniably to confirm, that the poor in this country are in a state in which they ought not to be—in a state hardly consistent with the character of a civilized country.—The hardships to which they are subjected, are such as, in some degree, to justify the statement, which has been thrown in the teeth of myself and other advocates for the abolition of the slave trade, “that the lower classes of the working people in England, are in a worse condition even than the slaves, who were the objects of our commiseration. As to what the right honourable gentleman stated, about the price of labour finding its own level, he does not recollect, that in the mean time, till that level be found, the industrious poor labour under the pressure of immediate suffer-

ing, and are placed in a state of intolerable oppression. Even if the expedients which he has proposed should succeed, they are matter of future regulation, and not calculated to afford that relief which the exigencies of the times so imperiously demand. Even if it should be possible to a considerable degree to promote industry among the children of the poor, and to destroy the oppressive restrictions with respect to settlements, still it will be a considerable time before the price of labour will have found its own level. Even if other more effectual regulations should afterwards be adopted, still this bill was eligible as a temporary relief. It did not compel the magistrates to act; it only empowered them to take measures according to the exigency of the times. Some of my friends have suggested that I ought to make the bill temporary; but that is not necessary, as its effect is not at all compulsory, if other measures should be adopted by which the object may be more effectually answered. The right honourable gentleman stated, that the object of the statute of Elizabeth was to prevent combinations of workmen; in this he was mistaken, the preamble expressly stated that it was for the relief of poor labourers, and such unequivocally appeared to be the object, however clumsily the framers of the bill might have gone about it. Gentlemen stated as an objection to the bill, that it went to fix the price of labour; they did not attend to the circumstance, that it did not go to determine what should be the general price of labour, but only what should be the least price of labour under particular circumstances. As to persons who were engaged in other employments, sometimes finding a resource in the occupations of husbandry, when their own business was at a stand, and being hired by the farmers to do their work at an inferior price, I do not see how these persons can be affected by the bill. It will still be necessary for the farmers to find persons to do that species of work, and it is not fitting that any should give their labour for a less sum than is competent to sustain them. As to the particular case of labourers, who have to provide for a number of children, I think that the wisest thing for a Government, instead of putting the relief afforded to such on the footing of a charity, supplied, perhaps, from a precarious fund, and dealt with a reluctant hand, would be at once to institute a liberal and ample premium for the encouragement of large families. There is just one to which I shall advert, before I conclude, namely, the wretched manner in which the poor are lodged. It is such as ought not to be in a country like this, proud of its freedom, and boasting of the equal rights of all its subjects. The landlord, who lets the ground upon lease to the farmer, does not consider himself as bound to repair the cottages. The farmer, who

has only a temporary interest in the property, feels no anxiety on the subject. The cottage dismantled, and mouldering to decay, affords neither warmth nor shelter to the poor inhabitant, who is left exposed to the fury of all the elements, and the inclemency of every season. The stately landlord, and the opulent farmer, forget that they have an interest in the preservation of the industrious poor, and that it is to them they are indebted for the support of their grandeur, and the accumulation of their wealth. If, as appears from the present temper of the House, a negative shall be put upon the second reading of this bill, I shall then move for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the statute of Elizabeth, and afterwards for a Committee to take into consideration the state of the poor laws.

Mr. MARTIN.—No person can admire more than I did, the speech of the right honourable gentleman. Subscribing to all the excellent sentiments it contained, I hope that he will follow it up with some measure for meliorating the state of the poor. But till some step be actually taken for the purpose, I will give my vote for the present bill, which is at least calculated to afford a temporary relief, and which does so much honour to the benevolent intention of the honourable mover. I have always considered it as a disgrace to the nation, that the industrious poor should not be provided with a sufficiency of wholesome food, and with a decent and comfortable lodging; and I think the country under great obligations to the honourable gentleman who has brought forward the subject.

General SMITH.—The right honourable gentleman stated, that the price of labour, like any other commodity, must be left to find its own level. He does not recollect that labour does not resemble any other commodity; it is frequently attached to a particular situation, and cannot be exported to foreign parts. As to employing the industry of children, such a measure, however apparently productive, ought not to be adopted without particular regulations. I have seen children, in some parts of the country, employed in branches of manufacture that were highly pernicious, whose wan and pale complexions bespoke that their constitutions were already undermined, and afforded but little promise of a robust manhood; or of future usefulness to the community.

Mr. MARTIN. Allow me to add one other consideration, that the great patience and submission, which the poor have shewn under the severe pressure of the times, and the peculiar hardships which they have suffered, ought to operate as one great inducement, why we should immediately take their case into consideration, and afford them the most effectual relief.

Mr. HUSSEY. I have some difficulty in speaking at all on this

occasion, as it is a subject on which I feel myself peculiarly depressed. All the propositions of the right honourable gentleman refer to future regulations; and of the bill as it is brought forward by my honourable friend for the purpose of temporary relief, I cannot exactly approve. It is evident, however, there can only be two ways to meet the evil, either to increase the price of labour, or to diminish the price of provisions. Of the two, I confess, that I am most disposed to favour the latter, and that if a legislative interference is to be adopted, I would rather wish that it should be directed to fix the rate of provisions. All the regulations suggested by the right honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer are proper, wise, and salutary; but the exigency of the times is such as to call for the adoption of some actual remedy, and something must immediately be done in order to satisfy the Public.

Mr. WHITBREAD then moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the statute of the 5th of Elizabeth; which was accordingly granted.

Mr. GREY.—In consequence of the notice I have given, of a motion for Monday, I am desirous to ask a question from Ministers, connected with the subject to which it may be necessary for me then to call the attention of the House. An account has this day reached the capital, of a Preliminary Convention having been settled between the Plenipotentiaries of His Imperial Majesty and of the French Republic, in consequence of which a Congress is to be held to adjust the terms of peace, and to which the other powers are to be invited to accede. I most sincerely wish that this intelligence may prove to be true, and I now rise to ask from Ministers, whether they have received any such intelligence, or have reason to believe it authentic?

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—I am so circumstanced as to be unable to afford the honourable gentleman a positive answer to his question. A paper has been shewn me, purporting to be from Paris, dated the 10th instant. It did not come regularly through any channel to Government, and there are some circumstances respecting the paper, which incline me to doubt its authenticity. As to the intelligence it contains, I have only to add, that I have not the smallest information on the subject, nor have I the slightest reason to believe it to be true.

The House adjourned.

*Monday, 15th February.*

Mr. GREY.—“ In rising to bring this subject once more before this House, I cannot help expressing my sincere regret, that the cir-



circumstances of the country have been such, as to render it necessary for me so earnestly to press it upon your attention. I have frequently been unfortunately called upon to make a motion of a similar tendency to the present; the task is again imposed upon me by the duty and attention I owe to the interests and safety of the country. I ardently hoped, that in the interval which has taken place since a communication upon this subject came from the Throne, something would have been done, calculated to give effect to the promises which Ministers held out; but I have been disappointed. I hoped, that since we were told, an order of things had taken place, which rendered it possible for us to maintain with our enemy the accustomed relations of peace and amity—an order of things no longer incompatible with the existence of social order and happiness—some measures would have been taken in the way of negotiation, and that the sentiments then brought forward, would have produced a conduct which would have rendered my interference unnecessary. I ardently expected, that while Europe was bleeding at every pore, Ministers would have done something to realize the fond hopes we were all led to indulge. No such thing has taken place. An interval of two months has elapsed, during which the most favourable opportunities for negotiating have occurred, and we, at the present moment, appear not to be a single jot nearer the desired object than before. From every thing to be seen, we are led to conclude, that a contest, the uniform progress of which has been marked with disaster, is to be prosecuted to the utmost extremity. Ministers have, indeed, changed their language and their principles. It is no longer the preservation of social order, the safety of regular government, or the extirpation of doctrines hostile to our tranquillity. They are forced to recur to the expedient of deluding the people with the hopes of peace, while they are determined to persevere in the system of warfare; and while they had professions of peace in their mouths, a new campaign was to be enterprised; while they are flattering us with promises, they hurry us into all the expences and calamities attendant upon war. Under such circumstances, I say, that I feel it my indispensable duty once more to demand the attention of the House to the subject, I hope with more success than has attended me on any similar occasion. I wish that the Public may precisely know what grounds they have to support the expectation of peace, or on what principles they are called upon to persevere in the contest. Before we embarked in hostilities, before we had plunged into a war which has been marked by such unprecedented calamity, by one continued series of misery and misfortune, it fell to my lot to support a proposition of an honourable gentleman, which

was calculated to explain and make intelligible to this House, and to our fellow subjects, the principle upon which Ministers thought it necessary to disturb the peace and tranquillity of the nation. Our efforts were not crowned with success. We at last embarked in the war, without understanding the principle on which we ourselves acted, or even that of our allies, without seeing our way, having in fact nothing to hope, and every thing to fear. The consequences which followed were those we had reason to expect. A confederacy without having the same view of the object to be attained, each studying its separate interest, could not be successful. By acting on one common and well-understood system, something might have been done; but by obstinately prosecuting separate plans and interests, the common cause must be ruined and destroyed. The first campaign was undertaken and ended with the defeats sustained by the allies at Dunkirk, and at Maubeuge. Propositions were again brought forward, to induce ministry to take measures for the re-establishment and preservation of peace. Force did not seem to promise success. The moment was, upon the whole, extremely favourable to views of pacification, but all ideas of negotiation were rejected. Then came the unfortunate campaign of 1794. From the moment we were obliged to retreat from Landrecies, it was but an unremitting series of defeat and disgrace. Holland was overrun. Holland, the taking of which was held out to be incompatible with the safety of this country, or of Europe at large. Again, in 1795, a proposition was made to the same purpose, but still every idea of negotiation was rejected. What followed? Prussia made a separate peace. Spain followed the example. Then appeared the pacific declaration of the Germanic Body, with the exception of the Elector of Hanover, who, however, in that capacity soon afterwards acted a different part. The Emperor at the same time, was indulged with a loan.—But why should I repeat these things? It is not, I assure you, for the sake of triumph, but it is to shew, that whatever blame might have been incurred, the fault is not to be attached to my friends or to myself—it is chiefly to warn you against that confidence, that unseasonable confidence in Ministers, which they have asked and have received, but which, in the mind of every wise man and well-wisher of his country, they must for ever have forfeited, since they have totally disregarded, not merely their implied, but their direct and positive promises. Let me call to your recollection what passed in this matter in the course of last year. Ministers came forward with smooth phrases, and pleasant expressions. They were afraid to the ears of the people with the harsh discordant sounds of war.

They used general words, which, it seems, meant nothing.— They held out a something that had the semblance of peace, an airy something; for what were they actually doing? What have they hitherto done? Deserted by Prussia, by Spain, by one faithfully after another, they continued, and seem likely to continue, obstinately and blindly to persist in war; and the only well-founded, but miserable hope, now seems to be, that we shall soon have the whole weight of the war upon our own shoulders. I again was about to present myself to your notice on this subject, when Ministers announced a message from His Majesty, and from that high authority we were informed, that the long-looked-for order of things had taken place; the crisis had come to a favourable issue; a negotiation was at last practicable. I had even given notice of my motion, but I thought proper to suspend it, because the grand barrier which stood in the way of negotiation being thus removed— finding that we were no longer to hear of the French Government being incompetent to enter into, or to maintain the relations of peace and amity, I firmly expected, on the meeting of Parliament, after the recess, to hear that something decisive and satisfactory had been done. Has any such thing been heard? No. Can Ministers state any thing satisfactory on the subject? I wish them not to reveal state secrets; but can they tell us that their readiness to negotiate has been followed up by actual negotiation? That terms have been offered, but that the French are haughty and unreasonable? Could they have stated any thing like this, I should have no occasion to trouble you with this motion; but when I lately put the question to Ministers whether this was the case, I received no answer. Had any satisfactory explanation been given either that something was going on, or that no treaty could be made, I would have abstained from making the present motion. Yet nothing of this kind is understood, and hitherto all our expectations have proved to be vain. Peace in their mouths, while they make only preparations for war. Another campaign is about to take place, and, it was said, another loan to be granted to the Emperor, a measure to which, compliant as the House have been, they will hardly venture to give their concurrence. I find it then, Sir, again necessary to bring the subject before the House, although it has not novelty to recommend it, and from the frequency of discussion has failed to excite much interest. I am again to press the necessity of taking immediate steps for negotiation, though, I confess, with no very sanguine hopes of success; the thin attendance of the House upon the discussion of a subject of such magnitude is no favourable omen. Nevertheless, I conceive it to be my duty.

to state the reasons that induce me to persevere in calling the attention of the House to this point. The discussion of the question is at this moment attended with one advantage. It appears disencumbered of many topics which were formerly matters of dispute. I am relieved from the necessity of arguing on the competency of the French to treat. We no longer hear of them as the avowed enemies of God and Man, of virtue, social order, happiness and humanity. We have renounced these wild ideas, and have no objection to consider them as a Republic, one and indivisible, founded on the basis of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, and the Rights of Man. This, in fact, is now a Government with which Britain is ready to treat. Another topic may be left out of consideration, the general situation of French affairs, particularly of their finances. At the time when we were told, that even the existence of France and French principles was incompatible with the security of Europe, we were told that destruction must soon attend their whole system, in consequences of the state of their finances. We always, Sir, opposed to these fanciful calculations on the subject of finance, the convincing result of experience. Notwithstanding the desperation of their circumstances, in all their operations nothing was to be seen but increased vigour and success. This mode of reasoning has also been relinquished, and it is unnecessary to enter into it more minutely. Ministers no longer hold out this as a reason why no negotiation should yet be proceeded in. They have given up the hope of accomplishing the entire destruction of the French; and although they told us that France was on the verge of ruin, that they were, nevertheless, ready to enter into proper and reasonable terms. I by no means intend to say, Sir, but that every thing must depend on the terms to be proposed and accepted; is, have any advances whatever been made? It is reduced to narrow limits. We have not now to discuss the nature of the French government, nor the state of their finances, but to inquire if Ministers had done something more than they appear to have done, and which, consistently with their honour, they were bound to do. I shall be asked, no doubt, what I have to expect? Why should I intrude myself into the councils of the Ministers, and perhaps throw obstacles in the way of attaining the object I so anxiously look for? Rely on their wisdom, and the gracious disposition of His Majesty, which, through his Ministers, he has lately manifested to the House, and to the country. I am no friend, Sir, to the doctrine of confidence in Ministers, who have so frequently shewn themselves unworthy of it. They have, unfortunately for the country, too long enjoyed that wild and destructive confidence. I bear in my memory the re-

peated delusions that have been practised in the course of last year, and particularly in December. I may be asked, what more can be done, or what line of conduct ought to be adopted? I do not presume to point out the particular mode, or to dictate the terms; but I wish that we may no longer be deluded by general declaration and vague expressions. I come forward and say, that if Ministers intend to prove that they are sincere in their desire of peace, direct proposals ought to come from this country. From the success of the war, and a review of the situation of the contending powers, I conceive we have no title to expect that the first offer should proceed from the enemy. They may perhaps say, that this would be humiliating; that it would be obliging Great Britain to prostrate herself at the feet of France. No! Sir, it never can be humiliating for a nation, even the greatest, merely to come forward with the offer of peace. I mean not to say, we ought to sue for it. When his present Majesty, in a speech from the throne, in 1766, informed the Parliament, that he had made overtures of peace, but that the terms proposed, he was bound to reject, and continue the war, was such a conduct on the part of this country accounted humiliating? When a nation is successful in war, it is generous to offer peace to the enemy. When they are equal, overtures of peace are equally honourable on either side. If one be extremely unsuccessful, humiliation may become a matter of necessity. I have several reasons to state why a proposal may with propriety come from this country. We have repeatedly refused to acknowledge the independence of the French Republic. We have thrown upon them every sort of abuse, which language is capable of conveying. Have we retracted a word of all this? Is the King's message such as would induce the French to throw a veil over the past? The French themselves have in this respect shewn the example. They at one time published propositions, which were perhaps justly accounted hostile to every sort of good government. These they have not vaguely, but directly and unequivocally renounced. We also, Sir, ought directly and unequivocally to acknowledge the French Republic, and with that acknowledgement bring forward our proposals. Shall this be called humiliating? The same argument was used by Ministers when we formerly proposed what they have since done themselves. When we wished merely to state upon record that there existed in France, a Government competent to enter into a negotiation, it was called humiliating to make such a gratuitous acknowledgement. Yet this have Ministers done; contrary to all their bold assertions, they abandoned the great cause of social order, religion and humanity, and leaving all these to their

fate, declared themselves disposed for peace. A desire of peace of consequence could not fail to be excited in the country; but the hopes springing from this desire are stifled as soon as they are created, and we see the war renewed as if no such hope had existed. It would certainly be a fair and manly conduct to go one step farther in the endeavour to procure peace, and directly and openly to make those proposals which prudence and honour may suggest. If the pride or ambition of the enemy form an insurmountable bar to our wishes, war may still be necessary; and however strongly I might be impressed with the idea of the incapacity of Ministers to carry it on, I should willingly yield to the necessity of its continuance; but before this dreadful alternative takes place, let us not neglect the means necessary for its prevention. A fair, open, and direct communication, Sir, is the step I propose, and I found it upon His Majesty's message, and the declaration of his Ministers. I have no occasion to enter into any debate respecting the war, or the peculiar mode of carrying it on. I argue merely upon the admissions already made by Ministers, and call upon them, if they mean to act in consistency with themselves, without farther delay, to follow out their professions by a corresponding line of conduct. Let the country know what they have to trust to; let not their hopes of peace rest on a vague and unsubstantial foundation. Having stated this much, I shall leave the question for the consideration of the House. Even now, while I am speaking, were I to have a single favourable assurance on the part of Ministers; was there any solid foundation whereon to build the pleasing hope of peace, I should gladly request leave to withdraw my motion, so little am I disposed to fetter their operations, or to pry into their conduct. Deceived as I have already been, I can no longer confide in declarations with which their actions so ill correspond. I have hitherto been disappointed; I have been unable to obtain what suffering humanity so loudly demands, but I shall persevere. Since His Majesty's message last brought this subject under our notice, even God himself, in storms and tempests, has rebuked the ravage and devastation of war, and loudly demanded an universal cessation of hostility. Seeing Ministers with different language bent on prosecuting the same desperate design, seeing no step taken to make a practical use of the pacific intentions that have been announced, I now call upon the House to ascertain whether peace, if attainable, be denied us by the intrigues of Ministers, or by the unprincipled ambition of the enemy? Thus we shall prove to the country, to the world, and to posterity, that we are actuated by an honest and sincere desire of

peace, and if disappointed, that we only persevere in a contest from which we are not permitted to retire.

Mr. Grey then concluded by moving, "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, stating, that it is the wish of this House, that His Majesty may graciously be pleased to take such steps as to his Royal wisdom shall appear most proper, for communicating directly to the Executive Directory of the French Republic, His Majesty's readiness to meet any disposition to negotiation on the part of that Government, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect.

Mr. Chancellor PITT—"Much as the honourable gentleman has introduced into his speech, connected with the origin and conduct of the war, from which I must decidedly dissent: much as I differ with him on many of the topics he has urged, and on many of the principles he has laid down as grounds for his motion; and firmly as I am persuaded that no measure could be more hostile to the true interests of this country than the line of conduct which he has proposed to be adopted; there is still one view of the subject on which I believe it impossible there can be any difference of opinion. If the state of the country, and the sentiments of a great majority of this House are such, as I have reason to suppose, there cannot, indeed, be any wide or essential difference as to the general result. But if, after the explanation which I may be able to give with respect to the state of this country, and the position of the enemy, the honourable gentleman shall still chuse to persevere in his motion, there are one or two consequences, which might otherwise be drawn from any declaration of mine on the present occasion against which it may be necessary for me to guard. I must, therefore, guard against any imputations which may hereafter be brought forward, either as to the insincerity of any declaration which I may express in favour of peace, or as to the inefficiency of the measures taken to facilitate its progress. However I may be disposed to favour that object, which the motion seems principally to have in view, I can by no means concede the grounds on which it has been followed up;—I mean that from a view of our situation, and of the events of the war, we should discover such shameful humiliation, such hopeless despondency, as to abandon every thing for which we have formerly contended, and be disposed to prostrate ourselves at the feet of the enemy. If the necessity of our condition, if the sense of having been baffled, should operate so strongly as to induce us to make overtures of peace upon any terms; if every consideration of policy, and every feeling of decent and honourable pride must be sacrificed to the extreme pressure of our affairs, we must then in-

deed be bound to receive the law of the conqueror. This situation of affairs the honourable gentleman has not indeed developed, but has pretty plainly insinuated as a ground for his motion. But I trust that the state of this country is far different, and that no temporary reverse in the fortune of war, no internal pressure in our domestic situation, has yet produced this mortifying humiliation, this dreadful alternative.—But the honourable gentleman, as an impeachment of the sincerity of Ministers with respect to peace, has alluded to an argument which was formerly supported from this side of the House, that we could not make peace without humbling ourselves to the enemy, and without discovering that we were baffled in our attempts, and exhausted in our resources; from this he no doubt meant to insinuate that Ministers were at no times since in their wishes for peace, and were disposed to throw every obstacle in its way. He does not think proper to mention that this argument was made use of at a time when the opponents of the war, availing themselves of a series of misfortunes and disappointments which had befallen the confederacy, took the opportunity to press their motion for an immediate peace. We then contended, that the evil was not so great as to exclude hope, or to damp enterprise, that no circumstances had taken place under which a firm and manly resistance became impracticable, and that we might still look with confidence to the effect of a vigorous and persevering prosecution of the war. In proportion as this truth has become manifest to the enemy themselves, do we feel ourselves inclined to adopt a more conciliating tone. In proportion as the situation of things is inverted, the objection which we formerly made, is superseded. That situation which the honourable gentleman chose only to suppose as theoretical, I contend to be practical, that our successes have been such as to obviate any obstacle to negotiation on the score of national honour; and so far I undoubtedly am of opinion, that the difficulty is infinitely diminished. In stating, however, generally, my own sentiments, and those of His Majesty's Ministers, I must protest against the practice of being called upon from day to day, from week to week, from time to time, to declare what are precisely our views on the posture of affairs, or what are the steps, which we may think it necessary in consequence to adopt. The progress of the measures, which such a situation of affairs as the present may render necessary, can only be left safely to the conduct of the Executive Government. If the House are of opinion that the business cannot be safely left in the hands of Ministers, the proper step would be to address His Majesty to remove them from their situation. The honourable gentleman says, that he does not confide in Ministers:



on that ground he has been led to give an uniform opposition to their measures during the war; and on the same ground he now expresses his distrust of the sincerity of their wishes respecting peace. Unquestionably the honourable gentleman, who places no confidence in Ministers, is entitled to oppose their measures, and to question their sincerity; but he is bound to conform to established rules, and not to effect any change in a constitutional question; I mean, whenever this House, adopting a motion like the present, instead of addressing His Majesty to remove his Ministers, apply in order to take the business into their own hands, they deprive the country of every chance for a successful negotiation. On a question so critical, I am afraid lest I should overstep the line of my duty, by entering too much into detail. Every gentleman must be sensible, that a discussion of this sort is attended with peculiar delicacy. But if such be the case in general, it is more especially so in the present instance. The honourable gentleman has alluded to the separation of different powers from the common confederacy. What but the separation of those powers has interfered to save France at the moment she seemed on the brink of absolute and irretrievable ruin? The separation of those powers has diminished that weight under which she seemed to be nearly crushed, has broken the force, before whose united efforts she must inevitably have fallen, that separation has given new ardour to their expiring hopes, and restored fresh energy to their exhausted resources. If the Directory have yet any hope of dictating terms to Europe, it is no doubt on the same policy which they have hitherto found to be beneficial that they ground their expectations of future success. If there is any thing by which they can expect to attain this situation of proud eminence, this object of their favourite ambition, it is by being able to instil jealousy, to sow the seeds of division, and engender sources of animosity among those of the confederacy, who yet remain united to oppose their power. On preserving entire the remains of that confederacy, depends the only hope of impressing on them a conviction of the necessity of yielding to reasonable terms, and of bringing the war to a desirable conclusion. And perhaps, in this point of view, an attention to the preservation of that confederacy, becomes a duty, not only for Ministers, but for all those persons who are anxious for the public welfare, and interested in the national character, for all those who are desirous of an honourable peace, and adverse to any peace purchased with dishonour; and if such be the case, it is important for them to consider whether the measures which they may wish to persuade Government to adopt, be such as may oblige the country to give up the chance of a successful peace altogether, or to take it

on terms inconsistent with the honour of the nation. If we receive propositions of peace on the terms of the honourable gentleman, the considerations "speedy and honourable," then, become separated. We must in that case chuse the alternative; if we accept the motion, a peace "speedy and honourable" we cannot have. But an honourable peace we may have, if we persevere in the same firm and vigorous line of conduct which we have hitherto pursued. This I know, not from any immediate communication with the enemy, not from any communication of their disposition for peace, but from the statement which they have themselves furnished of their desperate and almost exhausted means for carrying on the war. On this ground I oppose the motion. If I were not sincerely, and anxiously desirous of peace, I should be forfeiting my duty to the country, and violating the trust which I hold from my public situation; but I can never consent to the proposition of peace upon other terms than those consistent with the present honour, and future security of the country. The question, as the honourable gentleman has himself stated, is a very narrow one—"Whether, because after having received the message from His Majesty, no communication has taken place of any subsequent measures, the House by adopting a motion of this sort ought to compel the Executive Government, bound hand and foot, to commence a negotiation?" If the honourable gentleman entertains such distrust of the sincerity of Ministers, as to suppose them disposed to take no measures to carry into effect their own declarations, I shall certainly not argue with him on that point. But, in order to be consistent, the argument of the honourable gentleman must infer, either that overtures have been made on the part of the enemy, or that some favourable opportunity has occurred to this country for the purpose of commencing a negotiation, which has been rejected subsequent to the period of the message. But, not only has no opportunity been rejected, but measures have absolutely been taken to ascertain the disposition of the enemy with respect to peace, and to pave the way for overtures from either side. If a negotiation should be entered into, it is evident, that in order to give it its fullest effect, we should be careful not only to keep up the strict letter of our engagements, but to maintain full concert and harmony with our allies. I have only to say, that acting upon this principle, no regard to the form of Government, no difficulty as to the mode of communication, no punctilio of etiquette, no delicacy as to the first proposition of overtures, shall be found to stand in the way of negotiation. Such measures have already been taken, as, if the enemy are sincere in their disposition for peace, must speedily lead to a negotiation.—I admit that the

honourable gentleman in his speech separated negotiation from the terms. But in other passages he talked of negotiation as leading to an immediate peace. I beg leave by nothing I have said, to be understood to hold out the idea of immediate peace, or of peace at any period; I only wish that it may be known, that if negotiation be not speedily put in a train, it is not our fault, and that the blame must rest on the dispositions of the enemy. If the temper and views of the enemy shall have become more moderate, our prospects of that desirable event must certainly be greatly accelerated. But sorry I am to state, that strong as is my desire of peace, and confessedly weak as are the means of the enemy for carrying on the war, they have not yet made any declaration which can dispose us to give them credit for their moderation with respect to peace. I must at the same time confess, that I know nothing on the subject, but from the communications of the Directory; and from a paper which has been circulated with much industry here, and also on the Continent.—This paper is said to contain the terms on which they are willing to hold out the boon of peace to the people of England. If they will abandon all their interests, if they will renounce all those continental alliances, which have been supposed to be connected with the fundamental policy of this country, and the general safety of Europe; if they will sacrifice their good faith, and give up all the acquisitions which have been made by the valour and energy of their troops, then, we are told, that in return the French nation will honour the people of England with their fraternization. I hope I shall not be told that I am insincere in my wishes for peace, if I am not forward to accept a treaty on such terms. There is only one situation which, in my opinion, could induce a Minister of this country to bend to so humiliating a necessity, namely, the weakness and timidity of the nation, proclaimed through the medium of Parliament, in adopting a motion like the present. If this motion be not adopted, and it be asked what overtures we will be disposed to receive, or what answer we will make to any proposition for negotiation, I have only to repeat what I have already declared, that “measures have already been set on foot to ascertain the disposition of the enemy; and whatever be the result, that nothing shall be wanting on the part of the Government of this country to encourage a disposition to negotiate on moderate and equitable terms. I am persuaded that, if we and our allies are not wanting to ourselves, we shall be able to restore peace on reasonable and honourable terms, and that nothing but dishonourable timidity or undue precipitation can possibly disappoint us in the attainment of that object.”

Mr. FOX—Notwithstanding the mode of arguing which the right honourable gentleman has adopted this day, in introducing matter somewhat irrelevant to the question at issue, I intend to confine myself almost entirely to the subject of my honourable friend's proposition. The House will pardon me, however, if I make a few preliminary observations upon the manner in which the right honourable gentleman commenced his speech. Far be it from me to discourage any inclination which may be shewn to negotiation, or in any degree to retard the advance to peace. For whether the season for negociation be advantageous, when compared with those which have occurred at periods which are past, it is certainly advantageous, when compared with any that may be expected in future, however numerous our victories, or however unprecedented our success. I cannot, however, refrain from saying a word or two upon the past, not with a view to exaggerate the difficulties of the present, but merely in my own vindication, for having proposed pacific measures, when they were refused to be adopted. Will it be said, that when the Low Countries are in the hands of the enemy, when Holland is become a province of France, and when they are in possession of St. Lucia and St. Domingo, that we are in a situation in which more honourable terms of peace may be expected than when they were driven out of the Dutch provinces; when they were routed in every battle in Flanders; when they were compelled to retreat within the limits of their own territory; when Valenciennes was taken; when a considerable impression was made upon them by the Emperor in the North, and by Spain upon the South; in short, when they did not hold an inch of ground without the bounds of Old France? Then we were told that it would be humiliating for the country to offer terms of peace, and that we should wait till the misfortunes of our foes should lay them prostrate at our feet. When I proposed a pacification in the beginning of 1794, I was told, that the late campaign had exhibited a series of triumphs more brilliant than any which the annals of the country could boast. Last year, a negociation was moved for, before Holland was totally lost, the recovery of which was assigned as a principal cause of the war; and then it was said, that any proposal on our part would be degrading to the honour of the country. I hope, however, that he who thinks it possible to propose an honourable negotiation now, will no longer accuse us of having entertained a wish to humiliate the country, by advising the Government to offer terms of peace, in circumstances in which it was infinitely more advantageously situated. My argument at present, does not turn upon the propriety of proposals for peace coming from one country more

than from another, but, upon the seasonableness of the time. I perfectly agree with the right honourable gentleman, that the present is the most proper season which may well occur, and in the faith that he is inclined to improve it, I have the less disposition to press the errors of the past. But here a question occurs—Who shall make the first step towards peace? In all wars, I think, this is a point extremely material; and in this war, I think, it is of less importance than almost any other. When hostilities commenced between the countries, the French held it out as a principle, that they were determined to propagate their government all over Europe. How long they persevered in maintaining this principle, it is of little consequence now to decide. Suffice it to say, that it afforded a real or ostensible ground of hostilities, and that the principle has been formally renounced in an official declaration, abjuring all interference in the internal government of any country. This is an example which we ought to follow; and when the French have announced themselves at amity with the English Constitution, the English Government ought to abandon every idea of intermeddling in the affairs of France, or of altering any form of Government which they may think proper to adopt. Perhaps, I may be told, that even if terms of peace be proposed by this country, they may be rejected by the French, and that this rejection may render it necessary for us to interfere in the settlement of their form of government. But if we do not formally publish the declaration, we may at least announce our readiness to make it. And even then we don't go so far as they have done. There was a word in the right honourable gentleman's speech, which, notwithstanding all its pacific complexion, I was sorry to hear, and which to me appeared to indicate, that it is his opinion, that the present Government of France has not arrived at that crisis which was particularly described in His Majesty's speech. It was this, that the French Government were perhaps disposed to grant to this country, as a compensation for all the losses which it has sustained from the war—the honour of its fraternization. But does the French Government persevere in that system now? I hope and trust it does not. And if it does not, why rake up the recollection of former wrongs, and renew the causes of discord which no longer exist? The subject, however, chiefly depends upon a question of time. On the 8th of December, a message was sent down from His Majesty, stating, that the affairs of France had arrived at such a crisis, as to render negotiation possible. On the 29th of October, in His Majesty's speech, there was a paragraph upon the subject, the meaning of which appeared to me to be by no means clear. We were told, however, that it was afterwards ex-

plained, and that the subsequent message was nothing more than the natural consequence of the King's speech. If, then, the ideas conveyed by the message were hypothetically the opinion of the Minister, who was certainly to be considered as a principal assistant in framing the speech, we are to trace the measures of Government back to the 29th of October. But even supposing that the 8th of December was the earliest time that the King's Cabinet Ministers formed any definitive opinions upon the subject, when we take into consideration, not only the lapse of time, but the very extraordinary circumstances attending that lapse of time, it is natural to ask, did it require two months (or if we date it from the 29th of October, did it require three months) to come to an understanding with our allies; or rather, was it not reasonable to expect that something might have been done in that time? The expectation was more reasonable, when we considered what those two months were. They were not two months in the heat of a campaign—they were not only in a season, when God and Nature create an armistice, but when an armistice had actually taken place—they were not during the sitting of the Parliament, (though I am not one of those who consider the sittings of Parliament as an incumbrance to negotiation), but during a parliamentary recess, prolonged, as the friends of the Ministers gave out, for the purpose of leaving him unshackled to carry on the negotiation; and when these circumstances are considered, I wish to know why no steps have been taken? I must here advert to a passage in the right honourable gentleman's speech, in which he represented it as having been the policy of France to divide the allies, and when they were on the eve of sinking beneath their combined pressure, to detach some of them from the confederacy. Perhaps I am not so well acquainted with the circumstances of the war as the right honourable gentleman, or at this moment I may not have such a lively recollection of the details of its history; but I certainly do not remember any peculiar difficulties under which the enemy had the misfortune to labour at the particular conjuncture when our allies seceded from the treaty. I do not recollect that France was in circumstances of particular difficulty, when the King of Prussia renounced the cause of the allies. I do not recollect that France was in a situation of unusual hardship when she concluded a peace with Spain. Nor do I recollect that the Elector of Hanover and the other German Princes were exulting in the abundance of their victories when they commenced a negotiation. On the contrary, I think I have heard that Spain sued for peace, not when they were in the unimpaired possession of their territory, but when the principal provinces of the

Empire were in the hands of the French: nor from any information which I have received upon the subject, can I pay such a compliment to the King of Prussia, and the Princes of Germany, as to say, that they offered terms of peace to the enemy when they were in the career of conquest, and the zenith of their glory. I confess I cannot see, (if the professions of the right honourable gentleman be true) what renders an explanation of the proceedings of the Government of this country a subject of so much delicacy in the present war. If he admits that he is engaged in a clandestine negotiation, of the benefit of which he means to deprive our allies, and of which of course he would wish to keep them ignorant, then I conceive some motive for his conduct, and I am ready on such a supposition to allow his argument, if it is not honourable, at least to be logical. But if, as he declares, he is really acting in concert with our allies, where would be the harm, though he were to lay all the papers which had passed upon the subject before the House? Here I cannot refrain from making one observation on the difference of situation, in which we have stood with respect to our allies in the course of this contest. I cannot help remembering a defect which was pointed out last year, in the terms of the loan, which was then voted to the Emperor. It was then objected, that we did not bind him to persevere in the prosecution of the war longer than he thought fit. The answer was, if we bind the Emperor to prosecute the war, we must ourselves come under the same restriction. And now we are told, we cannot make peace, except in concert with our allies. I mention this merely to shew the different representations that are given of matters according to the pressure of different arguments. The right honourable gentleman has given us to understand something in his speech: it is material to know what he really intends to convey, to understand how much, and the precise value of what he has advanced. I understand him to have said, and I beg to be corrected if I am mistaken, that measures have been already taken by Ministers, with a view to avail themselves of whatever circumstances may occur favourable, either to making or receiving overtures of peace with France. I certainly do not mean to quibble upon words, and therefore it cannot be supposed that he can mean a continuance of the war to be one of those measures which he hopes are introductory to negotiation. If it be understood, that since the message of the 8th of December, he has endeavoured, by means of communication with our allies, to learn the grounds on which they wish to negotiate; this certainly is something; but it is an instance of tardiness for which it is difficult to account. And even admitting these steps to have been taken, it still remains a

question of serious urgency, whether the motion of my honourable friend ought to be agreed to by the House? That the manifestation of a sincere desire to negotiate would in this country produce an effect highly popular, is a fact not to be disputed. To the rest of Europe such an inclination would be no less grateful; and I will put it to the judgement of the House, if they really think the country will make worse terms of peace with France, because the French Government know our desire for peace to be sincere? Is it not to be feared on the other hand, that the mutual alienation of affection, and the mutual distrust which has subsisted between the countries, will create a more serious difficulty with respect to the success of any negotiation, than even the terms that may be proposed? In former wars, we have found that the obstructions to pacification arose more from the temper of the adverse countries, than the specific terms which were brought upon the tapis.

In the war about the succession, which, without exception, was the most glorious of any that this country was ever engaged in, is there any man such a bigoted whig at this day, as not to believe that the conferences of Gertruydenburg might not have led to peace, had they been properly conducted, and that the prolongation of the war arose from unextinguishable jealousy, and unyielding rivalry? I am not so sanguine as to hope, at this day, that no difficulty will arise in negotiation about terms. I wish to God that the situation of the country were such as to afford any reasonable ground for such a hope. But what I contend is this, that such has been the asperity displayed on both sides, in the course of the contest, that the temper of the Governments will occasion a difficulty no less formidable, than any that may occur in the discussion of terms—a difficulty which I am sorry to think the concluding part of the honourable gentleman's speech was by no means calculated to remove. It may be said, that the language held by the Directory was insolent in the extreme. But because insolent language is held by the Directory of France, is that a reason why the Government of England should assume the same tone of insolence? Were we to adopt conciliatory language, the effect would be immediate upon the temper of the French Government in softening asperity, and silencing abuse. And if such would be the effect in France, what might be expected here? It was stated by the right honourable gentleman that the motion of my honourable friend, were it agreed to by the House, would so cramp, fetter, and humiliate Government, that it would be impossible to negotiate with honour. This is an objection which has been stated so often in the course of the war, that it has entirely lost its force. When on a former occasion it was proposed to declare



the Government of France in a negociable situation, the proposition was rejected with scorn, and now this very declaration has been made by Ministers, and we have experienced no inconvenience from it. As to the prerogative of the Crown of making peace, when and how His Majesty pleases, no man doubts of it; but no man, on the other hand, will doubt of the prerogative of the Commons of England, to advise His Majesty, both as to the time and the terms of pacification. The present is not a matter of right; but a matter of discretion. I have put a case before to the House, which is so appropriate to the present circumstances of the country, that I may be allowed to quote it again—the case of the American war. In the course of that war, we heard from a noble Lord, that it was the height of indiscretion in Parliament, to interfere with the prerogative of the King in making peace. Parliament wisely rejected the noble Lord's argument, and not only declared that America was in a negociable situation, and that the States should be acknowledged as independent, but they even declared that no offensive war should be carried on against America; and this very declaration enabled the right honourable gentleman and his associates at that time to conclude a peace, the terms of which were certainly not such as the country, in my opinion, had reason to expect from its circumstances at the time, but which redounded much to his credit, when compared with the misfortunes to which it had formerly been subjected. There are certain bugbears which have always been held out by Ministers to Parliament, and which have been disposed of according to its good sense at the time. The pretences of State secrets, parliamentary confidence, have always been held forth as a shield for the measures of the servants of the Crown; but fortunately for the people, their constituents have not been always inclined to pay that attention to them, which to superficial observers they may seem to claim. As to the State paper to which the right honourable gentleman referred, and which he said was published at Hamburgh, and was industriously circulated in this country, I have not seen it, and therefore am not qualified to reason upon it.—But allowing the sentiments of the Directory, on the subject of peace, to be as wild, fanciful, and extravagant as it is possible for them to be, that is no reason why these sentiments ought to deter us from offering terms of peace. The time in which we live, is a time in which Government must pay some attention to the opinion, to the sentiments of the people whom they are appointed to govern. Were a disposition for peace, on the part of the Government, discovered to the people of England, it would diffuse general happiness over the kingdom; and if it was made known to

France, I am convinced that her concessions would be as ample as we could wish. As to the popular opinion in this country, it has for some time been evidently against the war; and I say it to the credit of Ministers, that they have sacrificed something to the Constitution of the country, in permitting the opinion of the people respecting the war, to have some weight in regulating their conduct. If the demands of France are exorbitant, let us meet them with reasonable overtures on our part, and moderation will have a greater effect than the most strenuous resistance, in relaxing their exertions. I know reason has too little to do in the Government of the world, and that justice and moderation must often yield to power and lawless might. This has been unhappily exemplified in the fate of Poland. Still, however, it is no light matter in national as well as private concerns to have reason on our side. I know I have been sometimes thought absurd, when I argued, that honour was the only just cause of war; but I still believe, and there has been nothing in late events to contradict the opinion, that reason and justice in any cause are the most powerful allies. If this be the case, let us manifest to France, to Europe, and to the world, a spirit of moderation; and let us this night address His Majesty to commence a negotiation with the Republic of France. I say the Republic of France; for there is more in names than one would sometimes be apt to imagine. At the peace of Utrecht, the negotiation was injured, by employing an ambassador in the interest of the Pretender, and why the Count d'Artois should now be so much countenanced by Government, I am at a loss to conceive. But let us come to the point. Ministers say this is all very good, if you let us do it; but if the House of Commons suggest it, it is very wrong. Do they think, however, that there is a Cabinet in Europe, or even that there is any man who reads a newspaper, who believes, that if the motion of my honourable friend were to be carried this evening, that it was forced upon administration?—nay, would he not rather think (if in decency I may be allowed to say so) that Ministers had made the House of Commons adopt the motion? Allowing the honourable gentleman all the confidence which he can desire, as much even as his honourable friend beside him, (Mr. Dundas) reposes in him, nothing could tend more to evince the confidence of the House in Administration than the motion that has been made this evening. Even if it be the etiquette of the Minister, that all declarations of this nature shall originate in the Crown, an etiquette which I do not understand, I would not put a declaration of the Crown in comparison, in point of authenticity, with that which the present motion, if carried, would convey. Let him

recollect that every moment of delay is a moment of danger, and therefore let him not procrastinate in making the declaration. He may perhaps have intended the speech of this evening to serve the purpose of a declaration; but he cannot but know the wide and unmeasurable difference between a speech which may or may not go abroad in an accurate manner, and a resolution inserted in the minutes of the House of Commons. I shall not say one word on the relative situation of this country. I am not one of those who are inclined to think despondently of the situation of the country. But if any thing could make me despond, it would be that species of reasoning, when after being told of the increased national debt; the load of taxes, and the subsequent misery entailed upon the people, I am desired to look for comfort to the ruined finances of France, which are quickly hurrying that power to the precipice of destruction; so that in proportion as the enemy retreats from the common abyss which would swallow us both, we are encouraged to be under no apprehension for our own safety. Even supposing France to come and bow at our feet, supposing that Louis the eighteenth were to be proclaimed rightful heir of the Crown, and supposing that she were tamely to surrender all the conquests she has made, it would be no recompence for the loss that we have already sustained. According to the statement of the honourable gentleman, the territorial rental of the kingdom does not exceed twenty-five millions annually. The taxes, if they turn out as productive as they have been estimated, will amount to twenty one millions, which with the poor rates, will make a sum equal to the whole landed rental. Now, though I am not one of those, who with a late petitioner, (Sir Francis Blake) think that land pays all the taxes, I think the weight of them lies upon the land, which cannot exist very easily under a burden of twenty shillings in the pound. I am told that things are worse in France; but will any man be bold enough not to wish for peace, because the finances of France may be in a state still more deranged than ours? Rather than continue the war for another campaign, independent of the moral reasons against its prolongation, I would not unquestionably give up our honour, not dignity or our liberty, which, till I die, I trust I shall never fail to assert; but I would give up all questions of etiquette and accommodation, and in fact every thing short of what most nearly concerns our character. Let it not be understood that I wish for a dishonourable peace, or peace on any other terms than those which are suitable to the interests, and consistent with the dignity of the country; but I am sanguine enough to think, that even now this country may have fair and honourable terms of peace. The Go-

verrors of France dare not refuse any reasonable terms which we may offer ; if they do, others will soon be appointed in their place, who will dare to accept of them, when peace shall be proposed. I hope and trust however, that it will not be proposed on the dividing system, and that this country will never give its sanction to any such transaction as the infamous partition of Poland. Dearly as I love peace, exclaimed Mr. Fox, and anxiously as I wish for it, that such a peace may never prevail, I most heartily pray. I hope, when peace shall arrive, that the interests of humanity as well as of Kings, and that of every particular state will be consulted, and that tranquillity will be re-established on the broad basis of justice, in answer to the prayers of mankind, who are now fatigued with war, slaughter, and devastation.

The House then divided on Mr. Grey's motion,

Noes — 189

Ayes — 50

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Majority, 139

#### LIST OF THE MINORITY.

Antonic, W. Lee	Knight, R. P.
Aubrey, Sir John	Langston, John, Esq.
Barclay, George, Esq.	Lechmere, Edward, Esq.
Baring, John, Esq.	Long, S. Esq.
Bouverie, Hon. Edward, Esq.	M'Leod, General
Bouverie, W. Esq.	Milner, Sir William
Burch, J. R. Esq.	North, Dudley, Esq.
Church, J. R. Esq.	Peirse, Henry, Esq.
Clerke, Jerv. Esq.	Plumer, William, Esq.
Colbourn, William, Esq.	Rawdon, Hon. John
Coke, T. W. Esq.	Ridley, Sir M. W.
Courtenay, John, Esq.	Rogers, Sir F. W.
Crespigny, T. C.	Ruffell, Lord William
Crewe, John, Esq.	Russell, Lord John
Curwen, J. C. Esq.	Sheridan, R. B. Esq.
Fitzpatrick, Gen.	St. John, Hon. St. Andrew
Fox, Right Hon. C. J.	Smith, General
Francis, Philip, Esq.	Smith, William, Esq.
Halhed, N. B. Esq.	Spencer, Lord Robert
Harcourt, John, Esq.	Tarleton, General
Hare, James, Esq.	Vyner, Robert
Honeywood, Francis, Esq.	Vyner, Robert, jun.
Huffey, William, Esq.	Walwyn, James, Esq.
Jekyll, Joseph, Esq.	Western, C. C. Esq.
Kempe, Thomas, Esq.	Wilbraham, R. Esq.

#### TELLERS.

Grey, Charles, Esq.

Whitbread, Samuel, jun. Esq.

*Tuesday, February, 16th.*

Mr. GREY said, that Mr. Whitbread having been unable to attend the House this day, had been prevented from making his promised motion for the repeal of the statute of Queen Elizabeth relative to the wages of labourers, but that some day next week he intended to bring forward the subject.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that in pursuance of the ideas he had thrown out on a late day, he would on this day fortnight move for leave to bring in a bill to reform and amend the poor laws.

Mr. COKE moved for leave to bring in a bill to alter the Game Laws, which he represented as very defective and injurious to the proprietors of land, the corn frequently not being off the soil in the county of Norfolk so early as the 1st of September.

Mr. CURWEN seconded the motion, and generally observed, that the game laws were repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution, without tending to the preservation of the game. He said, that he intended to move for leave to bring in a bill for the repeal of the statutes on this subject, except that which imposes a duty of three guineas for a licence to kill game, which he believed was of itself sufficient for its preservation.

Mr. BUXTON said, that, in his opinion, the game laws were inimical to the principles of, and a disgrace to the Constitution. He was clearly of opinion, that every man had a right to the game upon his own property, however small that property might be. He remarked, that, notwithstanding the existing laws, game was now brought to market, and sold at such a high price as greatly encourage the dangerous practice of poaching. Poachers were now become so daring, that they assemble in gangs, and by their numbers bid defiance to opposition, whilst they run every risk in the pursuit of game, and the violation of the law.

Mr. GREY asked the Secretary at War, whether the accounts of the army extraordinaries were yet ready?

The SECRETARY AT WAR answered, that they had not yet been made out at the War-office, and could not say precisely when they would be produced.

Mr. GREY said, that there was an act of Parliament which directed such accounts to be produced annually, and it certainly was the spirit of it to prevent any delay in presenting the details. He asked this question in contemplation of a motion he now gave notice that he intended to make on Monday next, if that day was not occupied. In consequence of the fate of his motion last night, he entertained very little hope of the speedy conclusion of a peace, and he therefore thought it necessary to call the public attention to

the unparalleled expence in, and to endeavour to ascertain the extent of the sums that had been already expended. He would therefore move on Monday next for an inquiry into the general state of the country, and particularly the expences which the war had occasioned.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House on the high price of corn.

Mr. LECHMERE rose and said, that he regretted that the attendance of the House was so thin, when he was to call their attention to a subject of such magnitude. Nevertheless, his zeal was equally strong, and his intentions equally benevolent. In considering the alarming scarcity which prevailed, the first point was, to ascertain the cause of the calamity. By the inquiries he had made, and the information which, by the assistance of his friends, he had been able to procure, he flattered himself that he had discovered the source of the evil. The question first was, is there an actual scarcity, and to what causes was it to be attributed? He was convinced, that in reality the deficiency in the quantity of grain in the country was not so great, and that the evil originated in the practice of consolidating into large farms, the land which had formerly been divided among a variety of renters. By these means the great farmers were enabled to engross large quantities of grain, and to keep up its price, to the great distress of the poor and of the public. Monopolies of every description he reprobated; but in this particular case, they were the causes of all the scarcity that was felt. In so thin a house, he would not offer the motion he meant to introduce; but on some future day he pledged himself to bring it forward. The distresses of the poor were in many places deplorable; but they could not be made known in quarters from which they would derive relief. The voice of distress that echoed through the valley was not heard upon the top of the mountain; so the distresses of his subjects often could not ascend to the ear of His Majesty, though his benevolence would be eager to relieve them; but it was the duty of their representatives to make their grievances known.—The unparalleled distresses of the country demanded their serious consideration. Now he would only say that he believed monopolies, and especially that which he had mentioned, produced all the miseries of scarcity, while no famine actually existed. This was a subject in which he was deeply interested. Should he succeed in being able, with the assistance of his friends, in whose abilities he had the utmost confidence, to produce some plan for the effectual remedy of the grievances, and of the miseries of the poor, that met the approbation of the House, he would account it the happiest day of his life. If he was unsuccessful, he would console himself with the worthiness

of the object, and with the rectitude of his intentions, and say *magnus excidit aufis*. He concluded with moving his resolution, which was, "That the Chairman of the Committee should be directed to move the House for leave to bring in a bill to regulate the letting of land, and to prevent its consolidation into large farms."

Mr. RYDER said, that he felt himself happy when he heard the honourable gentleman say, that he did not mean now to press his resolution on the Committee, and was convinced that no measure could be fraught with more mischievous consequences than that now brought forward. It was always safest to allow such matters to be fixed without legislative interference, and he hoped the sentiments of the House on a late occasion, would shew every gentleman how hostile they were to any such regulations as the present.

Mr. BUXTON said, he was an enemy to Agrarian laws.—There was an old law in the reign of Henry the eighth, which says, that no man shall have more than two farms; but an adherence to this law was found to be impossible.

General MACLEOD said, that the consolidation of small farms was certainly an evil, and well worthy of consideration: his idea of internal oeconomy was, that things should be left to find their own level, and that this would be preferable to any interference of the legislature. Perhaps some regulations respecting the agricultural system might be proper, but he thought the motion before the House went to subvert the present mode, of allowing gentlemen to let and do with their estates as they pleased.—They ought, therefore, to pause and consider well, whether it was advisable to consent to such a motion?

Mr. LECHMERE could not conceive how his propositions could be dangerous, as they only went to remedy the scarcity of grain. It was evident that the overgrown and opulent farmers could not cultivate their extensive possessions with that minute attention and industry which the situation of the small farmer required. The overgrown farmer was enabled to keep back his grain to advance the price; the necessity of paying his rent, and carrying on his labour, required the other to come to market with his produce. It was the duty of the legislature to interfere, and prevent this enormous abuse, at once so oppressive to the poor, and so injurious to the public. He would even prove that grain was exported from this country, rather than bring it to market at a price below what the monopolist demanded. While the abuse he complained of subsisted, what frequently happened would continue, that the great farmer would revel in luxury and voluptuousness, and the small one starve with his family in a cottage. The consolidation of farms

tended to depopulate the country, while it diminished the quantity of provisions. He would not attempt to describe the evils of the Deserted Village, it had already been done by an abler hand; they would find in the poem of that title, written by Dr. Goldsmith, a picture which was realized by the gloomy prospect which many parts of the kingdom presented. It had been said by a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox), whose benevolence was as far above panegyric, as his talents soared above all competition, that it would be unjust to deprive a man of the power of letting his land as he thought proper; but he would maintain, that no man was entitled to do for his own private advantage what was prejudicial to the interest of the community. He declared, he had received letters, which stated, that in the county of Hants, four farmers now occupied farms, which, thirty years ago, supported twenty-nine families. Should not some method then be taken to prevent this evil, and was it not a fit subject for the consideration of the Legislature? He declared, that so far from wishing to propose any thing calculated to introduce discord and anarchy, his object was to relieve the poor; no man was farther from the inclination to excite discontent or promote confusion. He wished to improve the situation of the poor artificer, the poor labourer, and the poor husbandman in every part of his conduct, and in every measure which, in his public duty, he supported. He was anxious that misery and oppression should be banished, and that the poorest man might be able to say, "I am an Englishman, I feel the advantages of my situation, and enjoy the blessings that are annexed to that character. I am sensible of the advantages which I derive from the fostering care of the Legislature, which takes care to provide for my necessities and enjoyments."

Mr. LECHMERE proposed to withdraw his motion; but on a division being called for,

Mr. HUSSEY moved that the House be counted; when not sufficient Members being present to compose a House, the Speaker adjourned.

*Wednesday, 17th February.*

Mr. Alderman ANDERSON brought up the bill, empowering the proprietors of the Million Bank to dissolve the society and divide the fund, which was read a first time.

The bill for amending the game laws, and regulating the time for shooting game, was read a first time.

The Legacy Duty bill was committed, the resolutions reported and ordered to be taken into farther consideration on Monday se'n-night, against which time the bill will be printed.



The bill for raising 2,500,000*l.* for the service of the ensuing year, was read a second time.

Accounts brought up from the Stamp-Office, were ordered to be laid on the table.—Adjourned.

*Thursday, 18th February.*

Mr. MANNING moved, that the bill for establishing wet docks at Wapping be read a first time.

Mr. PLOMER wished to be informed when the honourable Member meant to move for the second reading of the bill, and hoped that he would not precipitate a measure of such consequence through the House.

Mr. MANNING said, it was not his intention to move the second reading at too early a day, being desirous to give those who intended to petition against the bill as much time to petition as possible. The bill was then read a first time.

The bill for the protection of game was read a second time; on the question being put, that it be committed,

Sir CHARLES BUNBURY gave notice that he would move a clause for the benefit of sportsmen, to the effect that the shooting season should not commence until the 15th of September.

The bill was ordered to be committed to-morrow.

Mr. DOUGLAS moved for leave to bring in a bill to enforce the attendance of Members, on those days appointed to elect Committees to try the merits of controverted elections. He said, before he proceeded farther in the business, he desired to have it understood, that his bill meant nothing more than the explanation of an act, known by the name of Grenville's Act. That measure, by experience, had excited the suffrage of a large majority in that House, and had since converted those who opposed it when first brought forward. But as no human institution was perfect, it was his intention to move for a bill to amend that excellent institution from which the House and the Public had derived so much benefit. It was the object of an honourable Member last year to propose, and he did propose, a bill to remedy this defect, and he was sorry that that bill did not receive the sanction of the House, since there were many useful clauses in that bill, though there were others objectionable, upon which account the whole of the bill was rejected, and the honourable gentleman had dropped the intention of pursuing it. The first provision of that bill was now proposed to be renewed in this, because so far the bill had made some progress, that all had concurred with that provision. The object of it was not to introduce an innovation upon the established forms of the House,

but rather to restore the original intention of those forms by enforcing an attendance of Members on these cases, and allowing the House, as upon other cases, the power of doing so by a general call. In Mr. Grenville's bill, the House was not provided with the power and authority of making a general call as in other cases, and thus if one hundred Members were not present, or forty-nine qualified Members, no other business could be transacted; and while the formation of the Committee itself was protracted *de die in diem*, other public business also was postponed and the House adjourned. By this bill, therefore, that inconvenience would be removed, the Speaker and other officers would no longer be compelled unnecessarily to attend, nor would the expence and trouble of retaining witnesses be so extravagantly incurred, for if a sufficient number of Members did not attend, the House would be at liberty to enforce a call of the House as in other cases. He should also insert a clause to give a discretionary power of adjourning over for a certain number of days; his idea was for three days, as might be requisite, from Friday to Monday, since, excepting very urgent occasions, it had been a rule of the House for near a century past to do no business on a Saturday. Upon these grounds he moved for leave to bring in a bill to amend and explain an act passed in the reign of George III. for the more effectual trying the merits of controverted elections, &c.

Mr. POWYS said, that as he last year seconded a motion of a similar tendency, he would also most cordially second the present motion, and he hoped that the gentleman who made it would not permit any obstacle to damp his perseverance, and that he would engraft no foreign matter on it, that could endanger the success of his main object.

Mr. CURWEN, in consequence of the intimation he had given on a former day, of appointing the earliest day to move for a total repeal of all the game laws, excepting the three guinea licence, named to-morrow se'nnight.

Mr. GREY having been ignorant that Monday next was appointed for taking into consideration the Report of the Committee upon the loan, when he gave notice of moving for an inquiry into the extravagant and unexampled expenditure of money for services in the present war, begged leave to defer that motion in consequence to the Monday following. At the same time, he took the opportunity of asking an honourable gentleman opposite, (Mr. Long,) whether there was any objection to the printing of the paper delivered to the House on the 10th of November last, containing the account of the additional public debts from 1787? He desired also

to know, when it would be likely to have the account of the appropriation of grants laid before the House?

Mr. LONG answered, that the account of the appropriation of the grants might be expected very soon, and there was no objection to the printing of the other paper.

The account of the additional public debts from the year 1787, was then ordered to be printed.

Mr. WILBERFORCE prefaced his intended motion by observing, that when some persons considered how often it had happened to be his lot to bring the present subject into discussion, how often he had been baffled in the attainment of that object he was now about to renew, and when they considered the numberless vexations, contradictions, and disappointments he had encountered, they might wonder at his perseverance. Possibly there might be some persons though, who would ascribe it to obstinacy, or a desire of obtaining popularity, while others might ascribe it to the shame of receding from engagements which he might have too hastily made. However, if any such there were who might have indulged hopes from those vexations and disappointments, and the long silence which had intervened, that he would be induced to abandon an object which was dear to him as a man, and as the advocate of humanity, they would find themselves much mistaken. He trusted he should no longer hear, that he had taken up this business on light or trivial grounds, or from temporary feeling; he solemnly declared he was actuated by no such motive, he had revolved the business seriously and deliberately in his mind, he was influenced alone by the calls of humanity, and what he conceived due to every thing sacred in religion, and consistent with social order—such alone were his motives, and by such was he influenced, to press the abolition of the slave trade on the House. He wished gentlemen to consider that the present call on their support differed from all others, for many measures might incur delay without inconvenience, but the motion which he would submit this night to the House, called aloud for immediate adoption. The present question differed so far from measures of common policy, that the latter might, in a certain degree, without injury, require time and deliberation, and might be suspended without any material injury. But it was not so here. Here the mischiefs and the misery were still going on, and every year of suspension added fresh guilt to the mother country, and fresh calamities to the colonies. Thus far it might be evident that he did not pursue this measure with an obstinate pertinacity, but that he was directed to it by every religious and moral sentiment that could influence or agitate the mind of man.

If he was inactive on the occasion, he should accuse himself of guilt; and who would be bold enough to answer for delay, in urging a proposition so necessary, in his mind, to the salvation of the islands, the dignity of the House, and the honour of human nature? The practice of importing slaves was repugnant to the feelings of human nature, and disgraceful to our civilized country. There was something peculiar also at the present time to urge him to a repetition of his efforts, provided he had been less inclined than formerly to do so. He must remind the House, that after repeated, serious and deliberate discussion, Parliament had solemnly come to a vote four years ago, to abolish this odious and abominable traffic on the first of January, 1796. But as it was his intention to proceed regularly, he would call on the Clerk to read the journals. [The vote of the House being read from the journals,] Mr. Wilberforce proceeded: he observed, four years had elapsed from the time of the House passing that vote, and now that their resolution should be carried into effect, their decision. This decision, he said, was the result of mature deliberation.

After the many discussions which the subject had already undergone; he avoided the repetition of his former arguments however necessary it might be for the information of those persons who had not an opportunity of hearing them, for it would occupy so much time to attempt to convince those who came with any predetermination against the measure, while to every other person it would be superfluous and unnecessary. He was constrained to remark though, that notwithstanding the difference of opinion upon former occasions, respecting the time when it should be abolished, and the propriety or danger of the abolition, a large majority agreed that it ought to be gradually abolished. All the persons in that majority also branded it with approbrious epithets, as disgraceful to a free and liberal nation, repugnant to its interests, and discordant with its morals and religion. This was the ground on which he stood, and from which he never could descend. The heart sickens at the contemplation of the miseries in Africa, which this inhuman traffic has occasioned, while the mind wonders how it ever could exist. Yet we are still going forward, and still likely to go forward, hardening in insensibility, and making a mockery of every duty which we preach to others. There was one topic, however, which he would press with more urgency, because it was a practical demonstration of the theoretical opinions which he formerly advanced. Every one must see that he alluded to the state of the West Indies at the present moment. Last year he predicted these misfortunes, and expected the House no longer to delay an event which it was no less

politically than morally right to hasten. But now he proclaimed aloud that it ought not to be delayed one moment. Perhaps there might be some persons present who did not know that in consequence of this delay on our part, and the passing of a decree by the French, in the latter end of 1794, which liberated all the slaves, we had lost Guadaloupe and St. Lucie, &c. while the insurrection of the blacks in Granada might be attributed to the same cause. What other issue could be expected? Was it not natural that, smarting from the memory of recent wrongs, and anxious to recover that liberty which he so lately lost, every new-imported slave should lift up his arm in rebellion and strike at his oppressor? What are we doing then? By every instance of delay, we increase our enemies, and every year, every month, nay every week, we lend additional aid to the force that must destroy us. Will not the islands muster thousands who are ready to join the cause of those, who not only preach but practice emancipation? What tie had they for attachment to the planters, when liberty was offered them by our neighbours? Let any man ask himself how much more likely were the new-imported slaves to be influenced by French principles than others, and common sense must soon supply the answer. Let gentlemen consider, that no less than 150,000 slaves were imported during the last four years, and then shudder at the consequence. Let gentlemen look to the state of St. Domingo, and reflect on the infatuation of the negroes, and if they are not actuated by feeling and humanity, sound policy must instruct them to meet his motion with a speedy and favourable decision.

Those who were originally adverse to the abolition, he trusted would this evening give him their support; for had the inhuman traffic ceased when he first became the advocate for the unfortunate negroes, he was convinced, that the West-India Islands would not be in that perilous situation in which they are at present. He owned there was another consideration, which in his mind deserved particular attention: there was one class of gentlemen, who, with him, joined in opposing, vigorously, anarchy and confusion. These he implored now to act with him in vindicating the insulted rights of human nature—to redress real licentiousness, and adhere to the cause of rational liberty.—Those who agreed with him on that subject, who abhorred the destructive principles so industriously propagated, he conjured to support him on the present occasion, in that line of conduct which was consistent with the character of the House, and the honour and dignity of Parliament. Gentlemen might be habituated to look on the miseries of those wretched Africans with indifference, but a moment's reflection should instruct them to listen

to their afflictions, and become the advocates of outraged humanity. Let gentlemen for a moment bestow their attention on a neighbouring country promulgating the doctrines of anarchy, renouncing religion, and disavowing future retribution for past crimes. Shall it be said, that those who spread confusion through Europe, shall be merciful alone, in that point where we are deficient? Shall it be said, that they pour balm into the wounds of the African, whom we scourge and torment? He was convinced, that neither policy nor interest justified any such measure as the continuance of the trade, if any such measure was justifiable; and sure he was, there was no man bold enough to advance, that any interest was a sufficient apology for the continuance of such a system of barbarity and wickedness. What a contrast would future ages draw between this nation, famed for its religion and independence, and a neighbouring country, on the subject of this night's debate? What will future historians say, when they record our invectives against that country, for depriving their fellow creatures of liberty and life, rioting amid scenes of horror and devastation, trampling upon the rights of mankind, and scoffing at the woes they have created? What will historians say, but that this nation, professing a regard for religion, asserting the rewards and punishments of eternal justice, boasting not only of its own liberty, but its benevolence to others, in opposition to its own, acted directly the reverse of its doctrines, and encouraged a species of tyranny which included every evil and every crime? What will they think of our pretended attachment to the feelings of humanity, but that it was the cant of avarice, of artifice, and hypocrisy? Having said thus much, he declined troubling the House any farther. In bringing this motion forward, he could only say that he discharged his duty. He implored every one who might oppose him, to come forward, not with vague and general declarations, but clear statements and matters of fact. He implored them to state what harm and impolicy could accrue from the immediate abolition, and he implored the House no longer to delay a verdict, which had already been delayed too long for the honour of the country. He then moved for leave to bring in a bill for the abolition of the slave trade, at a limited time, and upon this moved that the House should resolve itself into a Committee upon the said motion.

General TARLETON said, though he always admired the eloquence of the honourable gentleman, and though he gave him every credit of his intentions, yet when he considered the critical situation of the West-India Islands, he could neither subscribe to his doctrines, nor agree to his motion. The Liverpool traders, he

affirmed, suffered more than any others by the war, as the African coast had been swept by the enemy's force. For the truth of this circumstance he appealed to Ministers, and thought it therefore rather severe, that their property should be marked for destruction by the adoption of the present motion. There were two propositions in his mind insurmountable, the expediency of the measure, and the time for carrying it into execution. The state of the West-India Islands was such as rendered the measure as dangerous as it was unnecessary. The motion for the gradual abolition was carried in the time of peace, and now the total abolition is called for in the year 1796, in the period of war, and when Ministers gave no very encouraging hopes of hostilities being at an end. Gentlemen should look to the state of the planters of the islands; if they did, they must agree, that so far from this being a proper season for an abolition, it was of all others the most dangerous, even for discussing the subject. He was afraid that such discussions alienated the minds of the negroes, and, aided by the French doctrines, were extremely impolitic, because black men bear heat much better than white, and are therefore more fit for the protection of the islands. Four or five regiments of negroes have been raised, and we ought rather to endeavour to increase the population; since it added to our defence, than depress it by stopping the importation of negroes to the West-India islands, at such a season of calamity. One thing he had to observe especially, which was, that the slaves have of late been treated with more humanity and care, on board of ship, as well as on the coast of Africa, than formerly, and as there could be no complaint on that score, he remarked the honourable gentleman had been silent. He declined going over any of the old arguments, but thought he should be doing his duty both to the place he represented, and his country, by moving the order of the day.

Sir W. YOUNG recalled the attention of the House to what passed in 1792, when every art was employed to irritate the public mind by calumnious misrepresentations of the manner in which the trade was conducted, as well as the treatment which negroes in the West Indies were said to experience. At that time he was himself in the West Indies making inquiries into the state and condition of those people, and on his return into this country he heard of the motion for a total abolition of the slave trade. He was also informed of the various manœuvres practised for the purpose of obtaining petitions, and giving effect to that measure. These manœuvres, it appeared, were not yet at an end, for he held in his hand a document to that effect, which he received from a gentleman whose name he was not at liberty to mention. He then read

the document, was which a letter signed Thomas Clarkson, giving instructions to some persons on the means of obtaining support to the abolition, by getting bodies of men, as well as individual electors to apply to their representatives for their votes in favour of it. Considering the manner in which this country was represented, there were very few places indeed, where some electors may not be found who so instruct their representatives, and even make it the condition of their future suffrages. The letter which he read was dated 14th of February 1796, after Mr. Wilberforce had given notice of the motion then before the House. The motion of the honourable gentleman he thought went too much to a system of morality, similar to that of the Jesuits, which stopped at nothing, where there was a hope or probability of producing good. What he offered to the consideration of the House was not simply his own opinion, or what he collected from personal experience. He was confirmed by the authority of Mr. Bryan Edwards, the historian of the West Indies, who declared to him, that he considered the disturbances in St. Domingo as originating in the Committees here, whose proceedings had the appearance of taking part of the slaves against their masters. Nothing, he was sure, could tend more to render the negroes on the plantations discontented, than an assurance that their labours were not to be alleviated by the arrival of additional assistance. In Grenada the disturbances were not occasioned so much by the dissatisfied condition of the negroes as by the treachery of the discontented French; and Pincaud, the leader of the insurgents, was a man of very considerable property in the island. At St. Vincent's so great was the attachment of the negroes to their masters, that there were 1,200 black volunteers, who after the war would be entitled to emancipation; but if the slave trade were totally abolished that freedom would be more productive of misery than happiness, and would be likely to be followed by blood-shed and massacre. He then stated a very extraordinary instance of the attachment of the negroes of his own estate, which he received from Mr. Guildray, whom he appointed to superintend it. After the battle of Gloucester Hill, a party of Carribs made their appearance in the neighbourhood, whom the slaves were unable to resist; and to prevent the planters' estates from being plundered, they made a subscription of joes, to the amount of 200l. which they gave the Carribs for the purchase of security. This subscription, besides shewing their very great attachment to their masters, was also a proof of their experiencing no great degree of indigence. Their perfidy, however, rendered this instance of their affection useless, as they sent another party the next day, which committed every



kind of depredation. He contended that it would be absurd to stop the transportation of slaves from Africa upon the score of humanity, because the King of Dahomy, who sold them to the Europeans, was resolved otherwise to put them to death. He then represented the exertions and expence which this country was employing for the reduction of the French West India islands, as indemnity for what we lost by the war; but he could not conceive the policy of our conquering a number of islands, if we were, at the same time, to restrain ourselves from the means of cultivating them.

Mr. BUXTON begged leave to trouble the House with a few words. An honourable gentleman opposite (General Tarleton) objected to the motion on account of the unsuitness of the time; but he differed from him so far as to think this not only a proper time for the abolition to take place, but that it would have been better if it had taken place some time ago. His idea was, that by the fresh supply of slaves we had thrown into the West-India islands we had thrown them into a situation of the utmost danger, and if once an opinion were to be received there that we do not mean to give them a speedy emancipation, he feared the whole of our colonies would be lost for ever. He had never heard of Mr. Clarkson's letter before; but notwithstanding he thought that Mr. Clarkson had acted like an honest man, it was the part of the constituents first to apply to the members, and instruct them in their proceedings, and then it was the part of the representatives to exercise their own judgment and act accordingly. For his own part he had always decided for the abolition, and could he, as an Englishman, do otherwise?—Possessing liberty and the rights of man, for every man has his rights till he has been base or unfortunate enough to lose them, he wished to see others enjoy the same blessings, and on that principle supported the motion.

Mr. COURTENAY observed, that the honourable Baronet had very ingeniously and ably stated the resolution of the King of Dahomy, instead of selling his slaves, if he had not a market for them, to put them to death; and all this he did with such precision and confidence, as if he had been the King of Dahomy's Prime Minister. So on a former occasion, an honourable gentleman who now presides at the India House (Sir Stephen Lushington) spoke of the same King of Dahomy, and informed the Committee that he frequently cut off the heads of a great number of his people as a sacrifice to his ancestors, and this cutting off his subjects' heads made no revolt; no, no revolt whatever; but, on the contrary, his subjects remained more attached to him, looked on him as the father of his people, and strove who first should have their heads cut off

as a token of respect to his ancestors. And farthermore, it appeared that there were some Republican States in the neighbourhood of this humane King of Dahomy, where the people's heads were not cut off, and the loyal subjects of this gracious King very properly expressed the utmost contempt and detestation of those many-headed multitudes. This anecdote the honourable gentleman who with so much humanity had brought forward the motion must have remembered, and therefore, perhaps, it was not right in him to introduce it. The honourable baronet to support his argument, had also described the wonderful attachment of the negroes to their masters, some of whom in particular he specified as belonging to himself. It appeared that these negroes, without pay, and with nothing allowed them but arms and clothing, very generously subscribed two hundred pounds to preserve their masters' property from Carribs, but the Carribs behaved treacherously, like our allies, and after they had pocketed the money, refused to act as they had promised. Now the honourable Baronet did not mention whether the planters reimbursed the same; but to be sure they did; there can be no doubt but they did. Such men of noted benevolence and humanity certainly must have reimbursed them, though the honourable Baronet unfortunately, in his hurry to communicate all he knew, forgot to mention it. The honourable Baronet alluded to the Methodists as the authors and abettors of the motion, who, acting upon absurd notions like the rights of man, introduced doctrines injurious, as he stated, to society. Now, it so happened, that the object of the present motion was practical humanity, a system of ethics, neither originating in enthusiasm, nor generated by methodistical spirit. For an enthusiasm and methodistical spirit generally consist in wild and theoretic cant and praying, which cost nothing but breath, and require little exertion. The theoretic system therefore, is that by which those act who oppose the motion; whereas the pure, vigilant and universal spirit of benevolence, which influences to happiness and good, is that which animates those who support it. The object of the honourable gentleman who brought forward the motion, was to release a wretched herd of men from slavery, to raise them to society, to enlarge their minds, increase their enjoyments, and extend their use. Unfortunately there was a malicious narrow-minded sentiment to counteract this; and this mean, insidious, artful spirit of gain and persecution, has been found to reside in men of high birth and station, and even in some of the clergy, who in direct disobedience to the precepts of their mission, have laboured to traduce and pervert the scriptures to their sophistry, and hurled forth their anathemas against those who dared

to controvert them. These fanatics have presumed to say, that because Cain murdered his brother Abel, some 5 or 6000 years ago, the negroes are doomed to eternal bondage, ignominy, and degradation, and are stamped with the seal of the Eternal's vengeance. They have been impiously bolder yet, and dared to threaten future punishments against all who endeavour to exalt these unhappy creatures into man, as contradictory to the decrees of the Omnipotent, making every benevolent and social act, like the bill for naturalizing the Jews, offensive to the end of time, as repugnant to the immutable decrees of Providence. Another argument which is used against the abolition is, that the negroes will starve, unless fresh slaves are imported to work for them, [a cry of no, no]. I declare, continued Mr. Courtenay, that I understood it so, and many other gentlemen near me did the same. The way in which it was generally understood was—how are they to live unless others supply their place; or else, who will take care of their cottages and gardens? Such another flimsy argument was that which stated that the negroes were better used to the climate than Europeans, and therefore they ought to be imported. Unfortunate indeed was it for these miserable beings, that because they were born under the tropics, they must be torn from their nearest and dearest friends and relations, and drudge through a life of slavery, beneath a torrid zone, when, if they had chanced to spring to birth in a northern clime, they would have escaped it all. While such kinds of argument were used, he should not be surprized to hear that by the increase of negroes the climate would be rendered better, inasmuch as we all know that in black there is an absorption of the sun's rays, and the heat is less, and by this parity of reasoning, the increased number of blacks would absorb the rays, and make the atmosphere more mild, while the whites, if they increase there, would reflect the beams, and burn up all the fruits like burning-glasses. When people come to such wretched expedients, he thought the argument would be better given up, and he advised them to give up the climate and the black slaves too. He was glad, however, that they were reduced to such expedients, because they were calculated to make but little impression, and he did not hesitate to pronounce that the vote of that night would decide the question. The honourable gentleman had truly asked what would historians say of the deprecations of this country, upon the enormities in France, when she herself is guilty of every crime that shocks humanity; and he might have made the contrast still stronger, for if the French in their renunciation of the doctrines of retribution, in their renunciation of religion and eternal justice, having liberated their slaves, what can

all our professions of religion, honour, liberty and humanity be, but the noisy cant of hypocrisy, while we subject so many fellow-creatures to uncontrollable caprice, to banishment, to slavery and sorrow? We can neither have a regard for religion, humanity, nor posterity; we must be insensible of shame, blind to the honour and interest of our country, and content to stigmatize ourselves eternally as hypocrites and reprobates. A circumstance had lately transpired, which, whatever may be the vices of the French, reflected honour on their characters. They had captured two British slave ships, with cargoes of Africans, whom they landed on their settlement of Okay, and gave them their liberty. By these means they acquired a reinforcement of men, attached to them for ever by every tie of gratitude; and this reinforcement they could not have had, if the motion for the abolition of the slave trade had been agreed to when first proposed. It is impossible that this inhuman traffic can go on without the total loss of our West-India islands. What had been said in the course of the evening? That the condition of the slaves, both on the coast of Africa and on board the vessels, had been meliorated. But how did this happen? Was it not one of the blessed consequences of the regulations proposed by the honourable gentleman. Yet even then it was said, "What! impose regulations? You might as well destroy the trade at once." Now all this is done, and they have nothing to complain of; and so it would be hereafter. He hoped the House had heard such futile and contradictory arguments so often, as not be deceived by them, and he farthermore hoped, that they would not be perpetually founding the words morality, christianity and revealed religion, without giving one example of the doctrines they inculcate.

Mr. JENKINSON declared, that in the present state of our national concerns he could not but deprecate a motion of this nature. He was apprehensive that its tendency would be to lead the negroes into an idea that the House of Commons was about to take up, what they supposed to be, their cause, in opposition to their masters. The effect of such an opinion, when entertained by them, would be to destroy all subordination, and to endanger the present state of the West-India islands.—He was free to confess, that, in his opinion, the danger of agitating such a topic, was infinitely greater at the present, than it would have been upon former times; in proportion as the French principles of equality prevailed, in the same ratio was the danger increased of an insurrection among our West-India negroes. A country might be in that uncivilized state, (as perhaps was the case in some parts of Poland and Russia,) that but the comparative risk attached to the discussion of such a subject;

but in the West India islands the people of colour in particular, from their increased sources of intelligence, had it much in their power to influence the untutored minds of the African negroes. It had been said that the negroes newly imported, are prone to insurrection; he believed the statement correct, and he allowed that it was natural it should be so. But he dreaded the danger resulting from the propagation of French opinions among the old slaves more. He considered the danger of insurrection from the slaves newly imported to be far less than that which would arise were an act of the British Legislature to be considered by them as holding out an idea of support against their masters. When to this he added the present convulsed state of the islands, arising from the war, he could not but anxiously wish that this question were, at least postponed to the restoration of peace (which he prayed to God might speedily take place). For his own part, he declared he was not one of those who was fond of a rash, hasty, or violent abolition of what custom had long established, and which had become thereby incorporated in the whole system of the commerce and jurisprudence of a country. He thought that when the blessing of peace came, some measure might be adopted for the relief of the negroes, with perfect safety; but till then, he wished the subject now started to be buried in perfect oblivion. He could scarcely perceive any practical good consequence which could arise from the abolition, sufficient to counteract those evils which such a measure was calculated to introduce.

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—After so much has been said, and said so ably on the subject now under discussion, it was not to be expected, that any thing new could be advanced, or that those who felt, as he professed to do, could admit that any arguments drawn from expediency, or from circumstances of a local or temporary nature, ought to influence that House to hesitate on the propriety of following up, and putting into execution its former resolution. For his own part, he wished to enforce it, because he still adhered to that opinion which the House had already passed upon the subject; and he should consider himself as doing injustice to those principles, which governed his mind and conduct, were he to wave them upon any inferior consideration. And here he freely acknowledged, that he by no means disclaimed an intention to follow up the motion of his honourable friend to its full extent. The honourable gentleman who spoke last, had declared himself averse to a hasty abolition of the slave trade. He was astonished at this declaration. Where, he would ask, was it that this argument, if it could be so called, was heard? In that very House, where, four years ago, the subject had undergone the fullest discussion and deliberation, which the

House had at that period postponed until the present; and when, upon the very principle of not taking any decisive step prematurely or hastily, they had postponed their determination during an interval of four years. Four years had since elapsed; and he was warranted to say, that during this period, the slave trade had been carried on to a greater extent than ever. The question, therefore, which was now before the House, was, whether it would agree to do that at last, which it had pledged itself to the world, to perform four years before? The only argument which he felt of weight sufficient to combat, was one, which was riveted by the force of prejudice. It was the argument of those, who, though they were driven from the force of conviction, to abjure the traffic of slavery, yet were brought to acquiesce in its continuance, from the idea, that more practical mischief would be done from its abolition, than any advantages which could accrue from such a measure. But he would insist on it, that it was dangerous to allow pretexts of one sort or another, to prolong a system, which, in itself, was admitted by those to whom he referred to be indefensible. Pretexts would thus never be wanting, to prolong from time to time, a system which merited the most severe condemnation. Thus at one time, excuses were drawn from its being a time of peace, and now from its being a time of war. He declared, that for his own part, he concurred with those who thought that the danger to which our West-India islands stood exposed, was an additional reason for wishing that the abolition of this trade should be delayed no longer. The topics of opposition urged by his honourable friend, with him led to different conclusions. He would not minutely argue what state of the human mind is the readiest to be infected with the poison of dangerous principles. He thought, however, that it was either when it was wholly uninformed, or when it was debased by oppression, either when it was so rude, so blank and uninstructed, as to be equally incapable of the impressions of virtue, and the suggestions of mischief: or, when it was groaning under the pressure of slavery and injustice. Granting the whole force of the honourable gentleman's argument, that the newly-imported negroes were most secure against the influence of jacobinical principles, still it must be admitted, that they were open to the attempts of others to enlist them as auxiliaries in riots and insurrections. If, then, there were any danger from the uninformed mind of the newly-imported negroes being operated upon by the perverted minds of the negroes of another description, it was evident that the one and the other of these dangers were united, so long as the system of slavery was continued. But it had been argued, that the danger arising from the negroes who have

been long in the islands, would be much increased, were the future importation from Africa to be stopped. But this is an opinion founded upon the argument, that the House's adopting the decision proposed this evening, would be considered by the negroes as taking a part with them against their masters, and holding out to them encouragement to insurrection. But what is this but to confound the two distinct ideas of abolishing the continuance of the slave trade from the African coast, with the emancipation of those negroes at present in the West Indies? The one point, however, had no connection whatever with the other. This much he could say at any rate, that the abolition of the traffic must long precede the period when the negroes were to be made free. A great change must previously be effected in their situation and upon their minds. Degraded and wretched as they now are, to declare them free would be only to confer an empty name, it could not bestow the substance. He had heard of the humanity of the planters, and what was the conclusion which this observation authorised? Could it be doubted that the planter possessed more the confidence and the attachment of the slaves born upon his estate, than of those who, torn from every tender relation, became the reluctant victims of slavery. With respect to those whom he has been accustomed to consider as the objects of his peculiar regard and superintendence, the planter must at once display greater humanity, and repose greater confidence in their fidelity and services. By endeavouring to put a stop to a trade which interfered with those principles by which the planter and the slave were placed in the most agreeable relations, which confounded those propensities, and disappointed the operation of those advantages which would result from them, a very important object would be gained. But so long as the importation of new Africans was permitted, new seeds of discord would be perpetually sown, and confidence, security, and the interest of the planters would be proportionably lessened. The honourable gentleman has argued that the negroes would consider the present motion as taking their cause against their masters; but this is so far from being the fact, that it would be giving to the master fresh means to attach the negroes to his service. It was said, that the negroes were desirous of new importations of slaves, that these might enjoy the happiness which their situation bestowed. On the other hand, the negroes were described as delighted with the prospect of emancipation, and dissatisfied with the hardships to which they were exposed. Both these accounts, it was evident, could not be true; and, in fact, neither of them had any foundation. It might even be affirmed, that the negroes were afraid, lest importation should cease; because it might

be represented to them, that, if none were introduced, a greater share of the work would be thrown upon them. This, however, would be as absurd as the other account; for, instead of their being rendered worse by the ceasing of the supply, they would feel, that, by preventing the miseries of their fellow creatures, they were themselves rising in the scale of human being, and in the enjoyment of happiness. He concluded with saying, that, upon the whole, he was so far from feeling any force in the arguments which had been adduced in opposition to the motion, that every consideration derived from the critical state of the country, and of the islands, furnished so many additional reasons, in his opinion, for adopting the measure proposed, with decision, prudence, and dispatch.

Sir RICHARD HILL said, he perfectly remembered that when a similar motion was first brought forward, a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) observed, that it was a contest between humanity on the one hand, and self-interest on the other. Sir Richard was then nearly of the same opinion; but he was now convinced, from the best information, that humanity and self-interest were at such perfect harmony, that he had just before told some respectable friends of his among the planters, that he was going down to the House to give them a vote for the abolition of the slave trade, and he was certain that a very short period would convince them that principles of liberty, love, and gratitude would operate to produce obedience infinitely more than slavery, force, and compulsion. There was not a single slave in all Pennsylvania, yet there we neither heard of murmurs nor insurrections. It was easy to throw out bugbear names against persons who respected religion, but it was paying a high compliment indeed to Methodism and Enthusiasm, to suppose none were friends to humanity but Methodists and Enthusiasts. He never heard that the right honourable gentleman opposite to him (Mr. Fox) was looked on as a Methodist, yet he believed him to be a man of real philanthropy, generosity, and liberality of sentiment. As to the time of bringing forward this motion, there could be no time improper to do what was right, and to abolish what was wrong. He only lamented that a traffic so contrary to the laws of common humanity, of nature, and of God, should so long have disgraced this country. He hoped, however, it was now going to be put a stop to, and should give his most hearty assent to his honourable friend's motion.

Mr. DENT denied that slaves were treated with harshness or cruelty. He was astonished to hear it asserted, that new importations would injure the islands by strengthening the spirit of insurrection that prevailed, for it was the speeches delivered in that House



which promoted the disposition to revolt. He considered the Annual Regulating bill as a decision of the House rather against the abolition. Whilst humanity was so much talked of, he wished justice might not be overlooked, for it was then only that they could obtain credit whilst these went hand in hand. He also argued against the motion upon the ground of political interest: the West Indies produced a great revenue to this country, but by the measure proposed, the House was going to deprive the planters there of the means of paying that revenue. He believed that the merchants of Liverpool, &c. had but one wish, that the House would adopt strong measures to prevent any of the Africans from being ill-treated; and, could such regulations be properly enforced, the comfort of the slave, and the interest of the planter, would be equally promoted. Those regulations which had been already made, tended to make the middle passage thoroughly comfortable; and had any complaints been made, it was because the regulations ordered had not been enforced. As to giving the negroes their freedom, without the means of procuring a livelihood, it would only be giving them up to a spirit of plunder.

Mr. W. SMITH. After what had been advanced, he confessed he had no new arguments to state. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had made so admirable and satisfactory an answer to the objections started, that he declared he never heard a more complete reply; a reply carrying conviction to every breast. It was his anxious wish, as we valued our character as a nation in the sight of Europe, and the whole world, to abolish so infamous a traffic. He considered the arguments of the honourable gentleman who spoke last, as a trite repetition of arguments refuted over and over again—that confusion and emancipation were synonymous terms with the abolition of the slave trade. He had asserted, that the merchants of Liverpool, &c. had no other wish, than to prevent the slaves from being ill used, whereas, he could not avoid remarking, that they had not proposed a single regulation, in any one of the former stages of the business, to render that middle passage more comfortable; so far from it, that they opposed every step taken, *tatis viribus*, and strove to the utmost, *per fas aut nefas*, to hinder the measures then pursued. He was astonished to hear it said that the middle passage had been the chief object of complaint. Good Heavens! Did the honourable gentleman recollect the mode in which slaves were procured, and the way in which they were afterwards treated? The middle passage might strike as peculiarly severe, but the horrors of the subsequent situation were not therefore overlooked. When friends of the abolition had disclosed the secrets of their prison houses no less than eight years ago, and when the

subject had undergone such discussion, surely no epithets could be less properly applied than rash, hasty and sudden. After suffering the matter to linger so many years, after an express resolution, he was unable to restrain his surprise and indignation at such an accusation. The honourable Baronet had said upon the authority of a most respectable gentleman (Mr. Bryan Edwards,) that the Committees in London had been the authors of the mischiefs in St. Domingo. For his own part, he thought that these Committees had been of great advantage in informing the minds of the people, and in raising their abhorrence of the inhuman traffic. A letter had been produced by the honourable Baronet, the reading of which was prefaced with observations which he could not reconcile with the contents he had heard. He had waited in the greatest attention, paragraph after paragraph, for the exceptionable matter, expecting it would burst out like the intrigues of the London Committees in the explosions of St. Domingo; but he could discover nothing deserving of censure, and he had been induced to believe that the honourable Baronet had read it by mistake, it so little corresponded with the character he gave it. As to the affairs of St. Domingo, he had been at considerable pains to ascertain the truth, and he would challenge Mr. Bryan Edwards to prove that the evils which prevailed in that island, were any more connected with the Committee than with Lord Macartney's embassy to China. He had heard descants on the joy of the negroes in the West Indies, on the fresh importation of slaves from Africa, as if it arose from the idea, that their newly-imported brethren were come to partake of the same comforts that they did! What these comforts were, and what their situation was already, appeared from many accounts. A true cause for this joy might be ascribed to the nature of society, which seeks for partners in sorrow, and which often tends to alleviate the grief which is endured. He declared he wished to say nothing to the prejudice of the planters; at the same time he could not help fearing, that before this object was brought forward, whatever might be the character of individuals, the situation of those under their power was not so happy as it was at present. Whatever might be the natural dispositions of the planters, arbitrary power corrupts the mind; and as the regulations formerly existed, the possession of unlimited authority would easily lead to its abuse. But however the House might admit the claims demanded for the planters, so far as these were probably just, there were others which they could not recognize. The House could not allow the claims of persons prejudiced from habit and biased by interest, to decide upon a great question of general policy; nor could they agree that the British Parliament should

give up its undoubted right to decide upon the final abolition of this inhuman traffic. He concluded with saying, that he hoped this night the first step would be taken to secure this object.

Mr. Sergeant ADAIR said, that as he never yet had delivered his sentiments upon this subject, he could not content himself with a silent support of the motion for the abolition. He would not, however, detain the House long. The question depended upon principles so few and so simple, that details were not only superfluous, but insulting to the House. Before he mentioned these, however, he felt himself called upon to return his thanks to the honourable gentleman who was the author of the present motion, for his zealous exertions in a cause which involved the dearest interests of mankind, and in supporting which he should be satisfied to follow him at an humble distance. He was much surprised on this, as well as on former occasions, to see so much of the time of the House consumed in debating upon the policy and expediency of what, on all hands, was deemed to be a matter of right. In matters of doubtful right, or even in cases of gratuitous benevolence, it was certainly proper to discuss the policy of the measure to be adopted. But in cases where the right was indubitable, and justice loudly calls for a decision on its side, then all the suggestions of policy should be for ever set apart. In highway robberies, the necessities of the robber were not to be sustained as an apology for the crime; neither in the Slave Trade was the interest of the merchant to be sustained as an argument for persevering in the traffic. He begged that the House would attend to the question upon which they were now deliberating; it was no less than this, Whether it was politic and expedient to deliver a whole nation and their posterity into slavery with whom we are not now at war. He appealed to the general feeling of the House, if any motives of expediency, however powerful, if any argument of interest, however conclusive, ought to influence their decision upon such a point. Though it were proved by the most irrefragable arguments to be for the interest of the West-India planters, that the trade should be continued, he would not give up the question of justice. He had the satisfaction of learning, however, that persons could be found voluntarily to perform the task assigned to the negroes infinitely more to the advantage of the planters. But even though this were not the case, a British House of Commons could certainly never hesitate a moment in preferring the claims of justice to policy. They had heard a great deal about the comforts of the middle voyage. But to talk of the comforts of a voyage, by which thousands of the human race, together with their posterity, were to be consigned to perpetual sla-

very, was a language with which he was not acquainted. He was happy in believing that the abolition of this nefarious trade would not operate to injure the West India planters. He did not however give this vote upon any such ground, but because he was so tied down by principle, that he had no right to vote otherwise. The learned Sergeant concluded with observing, in the most solemn manner, that to all who believed in a superintending providence, the Slave Trade of itself was sufficient to account for all the calamities which had lately befallen Europe, and might completely justify the avenging angel, in entirely extirpating those nations from the face of the earth, who had availed themselves of their commercial eminence, to oppress and enslave such a numerous tribe of their fellow creatures.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that having solemnly, and after due consideration of this important question, given his opinion upon it on a former occasion, he had to state, that in the course of the last four years he had been confirmed in every principle which he had delivered, and in every expedient which he had held forth at the commencement of that period. With those who argued on the general principle of the Slave Trade as inexpedient, impolitic, and incompatible with the justice and humanity of the British Constitution, he had always agreed, and still must agree. But to those who now took up the question he must say, that however laudable their motives might be, the mode which they had taken rather tended to retard the object they had in view, than to obtain it; and indeed he thought they would be farther from it by adopting such a proceeding than they were four years ago: for whatever opinions men may form upon speculative subjects, if they do not carry along with them the prejudices, and the interests of mankind, they will certainly fail in the application of these principles. Though he had no difficulty in giving it as his opinion, that the West-India planters mistake their own interest by persevering in the trade of carrying slaves from Africa, yet he could by no means join in the high tone which the learned Sergeant had assumed; a tone in which he was convinced his honourable friend (if he would permit the designation) would not have spoken, had he been aware of the full extent to which his reasoning went. He could not go so far as to brand all his ancestors, who had encouraged the trade by a long series of legislation, as impious and unjust. In justice, therefore, to the *manes* of his ancestors, as well as to other considerations of still greater weight, he was restrained from going the length that the opinion of the learned Sergeant goes. But he repeated it again, that the motion which had been proposed this evening, would defeat

its own object, and that any other mode of abolition than that, by introducing gradual regulations, according to the ages of those imported from Africa, never would succeed. Even supposing, however, that not another slave was to be exported from Africa to the British West-India islands, the cause of humanity would not gain in the least from such abolition; for it would only throw the trade into the hands of other commercial powers, who would benefit from our mistaken benevolence, and who would carry it on without any regulations. The Advocates for immediate abolition exclaimed, "Come, let us wipe away this stain from the national character." This might be a very fine figure in rhetoric, but it certainly was not a logical argument, nor was it, in fact, any argument in the cause of humanity. This was not the ground, however, on which he opposed the present motion. He opposed it because he thought, were it agreed to by the House, it would endanger the peace of the country. What was the measure, he asked, which was now proposed? His honourable friend disclaimed all idea of emancipation; though when he remarked this, he could not but remind the learned Sergeant, that his argument, if carried to its full extent, would go to evince the emancipation of every slave in the West Indies, as a right, which in justice they might claim. Supposing it, however, only to amount to a prohibition of the trade with Africa, he contended that such a resolution, were it passed into a law in the present distracted state of the colonies, would throw them entirely into the power of the enemy. In support of this proposition, he begged that the House would only attend to the nature of the war in the West Indies. On the part of this country, it was not a war for riches or local aggrandizement, but a war for security. On the part of the enemy, it was a war, not for conquest with a view to enrich themselves, but a war of devastation, in order to impoverish this country, and thus to obtain, not a direct, but an indirect superiority over their enemies. The way in which they have carried it on in order to attain this object, had been by attempts to stir up the slaves to insurrection against their masters. And the engine which they had used in this warfare was proclaiming liberty to the negroes, while at the same time, under pretext of espousing their cause, they exercised cruelties unheard of before, and imposed a bondage to which their newly acquired vassals were entire strangers. They hold out, however, that the slaves in our colonies were in a state of barbarous oppression, and this was the mode in which they thought proper to convey their relief. He would ask, however, whether the representatives of the people of Great Britain, in the calmness of legislative deliberation, would furnish their enemies with an engine; and while

Victor Hughes entered our Colonies with a decree of the National Convention of France in hand, declaring liberty to our slaves, we could furnish him with an act of the British Parliament with which to advance in the other, desiring them to join their deliverers, and oppose those who had so long been their oppressors. In the present convulsed state of those islands, he thought it became the Legislature to pause, especially as it might be hoped a time was fast approaching when questions of that nature might be agitated with much greater safety and utility. But as this, in his opinion, was not the time, he should certainly oppose the present motion; not by a direct negative, but by voting for the previous question, which would not pledge the House to any opinion upon the subject.

It had been urged, that the House had come to a resolution four years ago that the trade should be abolished in the beginning of 1796. But he would ask in reply, if we were in the same situation in regard to our West-India colonies that we were then, and whether the delay which was then thought necessary on account of the state of Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent's, and Dominica, was not more necessary now when the situation of these islands was considered, and whether the suspension of any resolution for an immediate abolition was not particularly requisite in existing circumstances? No man would state that the condition of Grenada, whether it arose from the war or not, was better now than it was four years ago. St. Vincent's, he was sorry to say, was in a similar unfortunate situation. It was true that there had been a great number of slaves imported from Africa to the West Indies in the course of the last four years, but little advantage had been derived to these islands from the importation, as they had been all carried to foreign islands, or to Jamaica, where they were sold for almost nothing. He did not mean to insinuate any thing disrespectful of the decisions of this House; but he contended, that a resolution being voted, and sent up to the Lords four years ago, which resolution was never returned, was at least evidence sufficient to shew that the other House of Parliament did not consider the time of war as the most proper for the agitation of such a question as the present. And he would ask the honourable mover, if he thought that that House would be a whit more rapid in their proceedings, though they were pressed by another Resolution from the House of Commons? He trembled for the effects which the frequent discussions of such questions would produce in the West-India colonies, if they were renewed from time to time as they had been of late, and entreated that gentlemen would only defer the discussion till a proper season arrived, which he trusted would not be remote. But

in the full conviction that this was the most improper time which could be selected for the agitation of the question, and that the present was not only a motion which it would be extremely dangerous to adopt upon general grounds, but which was wholly inadequate for the purpose which it proposed; he felt himself compelled to negative it, by voting for the previous question.

Mr. FOX.—The sentiment of opposition to this trade is one, which if it has once got possession of the breast of an honest man, it is impossible that any mode of debating or of resisting it should add to the impression which must already be made on his mind. But if it is possible that any mode of resistance to the question of abolition should have the effect to inspire me with a greater degree of earnestness than I already feel on the subject, it is that which has been attempted by the right honourable gentleman who spoke last. I confess, that I am not a little indignant at the mode in which he has treated the subject. The honour of the House, the honour of the legislature, and regard to the principles of the Constitution, make me feel warm upon the occasion. As for the general subject, it has been already so repeatedly discussed, that it cannot be necessary for me again to bring it before your view. It has been this night so ably handled by the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), whose opinion with this House is likely to have more weight than mine, that I will not venture to take from the impression of any thing he has said.—I must however take notice of one assertion of the honourable Baronet (Sir William Young), that there were many matters cleared up with respect to the characters of the planters. That honourable Baronet will give me leave to say, that it is not to those who live among slaves, that I will naturally look for examples of humanity. To the charges which have been brought of the cruel treatment of slaves, I grant there may be many honourable exceptions. But when I am desired to look for examples of the most exalted humanity and benevolence to those men, who framed the barbarous laws of Jamaica—when I am referred, as a model of mildness and mercy to the conduct of the men concerned in carrying those laws into execution, I must a little hesitate.—What must be my feelings, when I read of laws by which men are condemned to be exposed in cages to the burning influence of the sun; and when I learn that such laws have actually been carried into effect! From the perusal of such facts I must necessarily recoil, though, upon the whole, I am not apt to believe that the planters are distinguished by any particular humanity in the exercise of a power with which, however, I contend that no man ought to be entrusted. I must remind gentlemen, that at present the question

is not emancipation, but abolition. How far the argument of my honourable friend (Serjeant Adair) might go to the point of emancipation it cannot be now necessary to discuss. The question is,—whether we will suffer a horrible injustice to be carried on under the sanction of our laws. The question is not one that interferes with the local jurisdiction of the Colonies; it is, whether, we shall exert a right, which undoubtedly we possess, to determine with respect to the continuance of a trade, which depends on ourselves. The confusion in this instance, has risen from the idea, that if the abolition takes place, it must necessarily be followed by the emancipation. I hope and trust that it will; but this point I leave for the decision of the proper Legislature, with whose province I have no wish to interfere. But we are told that we ought not to join with the negroes against their masters. Undoubtedly, it would to us be matter of greater satisfaction, if we could, in this business obtain the concurrence of all the planters. But how does this argument agree with the other statement of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) that by agreeing to the abolition we shall afford an argument to victor Hugues, who will be enabled to say, “The French Convention liberates slaves, the British Parliament takes no care of them; it abolishes indeed, the traffic in slaves, but leaves to their fate those, who are already in bondage.” Indeed, I do not see how this argument can possibly apply, except I were to conceive that the right honourable gentleman was arguing for the emancipation. I think that it is not necessary to employ more than one argument with respect to the character of the House, “Did you not, four years ago, pledge yourselves at this time, to abolish the detestable traffic in human flesh?” The honourable Baronet says, that the House then acted from the opinion expressed in the numerous petitions, which were received from different parts of the country. What then, would you have it go abroad, that the House supposed it right, to act from the opinion of the public, in order to ensure a little popularity, and promote their petty interests at elections, and the moment that the pressure of that opinion is withdrawn, conceive themselves to be justified in renouncing the pledge which they had solemnly adopted? And what is the period at which you chuse to hold up the House in this light; after the passing of the two bills which have thrown difficulties in the way of expressing the public opinion? Is it at such a period you think proper to hold out that you are so much inclined to favour the cause of slavery, in opposition to truth, justice, and humanity, that though you formerly truckled to popular opinion, you now come forward in your genuine colours, and, in violation of the most solemn and



deliberate pledge, announce yourselves the advocates and supporters of slavery? If any thing can add to the flagrantcy of the case, it is the conduct which has been adopted by the House of Lords since this question came before them. I suppose that it is not regular in this place to arraign the conduct of the House of Lords,—and therefore I will not arraign it. But there is one ground suggested by the right honourable gentleman, on which I can, consistently with order, advert to their conduct. He said, that the House of Lords had as much right to their opinion, as this House has to theirs. Now let me state a case: If after a long and laborious investigation, on a point deeply affecting the honour of the national character, and the general interests of humanity, their Lordships had communicated to us the result of their deliberations, involving an issue of the most pressing urgency, and of the greatest practical importance, and had called upon us for our decision; and if we, after four years, had come to no resolution, and taken no notice of such communication, I have no hesitation to say, that in such a case we should have betrayed our trust, and have had no right to sit as a branch of the Legislature. What chiefly appears extraordinary is, that the Lords should take no step at all in the business; that they should flinch from the proceeding, and abandon it, as it were, to silent contempt. Undoubtedly every branch of the Legislature has a right to expect from the others, either agreement or dissent to any measure, which it may chuse to bring forward. And it is well known, that if this House takes the business to the House of Peers, as it ought, it never will experience such mortifying neglect, or such contemptuous silence. The right honourable gentleman will not deny that if a majority of this House cordially concur as to the principle of the abolition, and agree as to the necessity of carrying it into effect with the smallest delay, the House of Lords will also concur in the propriety of taking some immediate steps for the purpose. But if the House of Commons never are in earnest on the business, it is in vain that they carry their Resolution to the House of Lords. That House will see through the pretext, they will second the policy, and will suppose, that by such neglect and delay, which amount, in fact, to rejection; they better comply with the wishes of the House of Commons, as to the real state of the question, than by giving it the most cordial reception, and the most diligent attention. It is necessary for the honour of the House, that this reproach should not attach. In order to vindicate the dignity of their character, and the consistency of their proceedings, it is incumbent upon them to shew, by adopting the motion of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) that

if the resolution which they some years since passed for the abolition of the slave trade be rejected, it is the fault, not of the Commons, but of some other part of the Legislature. But it has been said, that if you abolish the trade, other powers will take it up. This is an argument which cannot at all affect the line of conduct which we are bound to pursue. The question is, whether you have not the power of completely abolishing it in your own colonies? Unquestionably you have, notwithstanding what has been urged, that they will still continue to be supplied from other Powers. You may certainly as easily put a stop to any contraband trade of this sort, as to the trade which was formerly carried on in importing provisions from America. There is no vigour of means, or language of authority, which you ought not to employ for that object. This country ought to threaten with independence every colony which, after the interdiction of the Legislature, should still persevere to carry on that infamous traffic. But it is farther said, that even if the trade were abolished by us, the interests of humanity would not be benefited, and that it would be carried on with circumstances of still greater cruelty and oppression. Upon the same principle might we justify every crime. It might be alledged, that crimes must be committed in society, and that therefore we will anticipate the criminal purpose, in order to prevent it being perpetrated with more wanton outrage, or determined ferocity. By this reasoning the robber might defend his occupation of plunder; he might say, "It is an advantage to myself, and I exercise it with less wickedness to others, than more hardened or savage offenders." The same argument might be brought to extenuate the crime of murder; it might be alledged, that it was less reprehensible, because it was accompanied with fewer circumstances of excruciating torture, or persevering malice. The right honourable gentleman treated, as a figure of rhetoric, the expression, "to drive the shame of this iniquitous traffic from ourselves." A figure of rhetoric, good God! can any appeal be more forcible and impressive, more directly practical, more powerfully urgent? Is it nothing to drive from ourselves the shame of such a traffic, at a period too when great revolutions have seemed, in future, to demand a more intimate connection between politics and morals; when nations affect to hold out the principles of eternal justice, as the basis of their conduct, and to establish a character of something better than the artifices of intrigue, or the resources of their power? Is it nothing to wipe away the guilt and the stain of a traffic which the right honourable gentleman has himself admitted to be inconsistent with humanity and justice? If the House of Commons still mean to persevere

in the trade, for Heaven's sake let them, at least, act fairly and manfully. Let them not use a timid caution, or skulk behind the shameful negligence of others. Let them boldly and openly declare, that after they have confessed the trade to be cruel and unjust, they still mean to carry it on to an unlimited extent. But the right honourable gentleman has alledged as a reason why we ought to give some quarter to this trade, the respect which we owe to our forefathers. We ought not forsooth to load their memories with all that accumulation of guilt which is charged upon this traffic, or to brand with such harsh epithets a practice which they encouraged by their example. Reverence for their characters, and regard to their names ought to sink the consideration of injustice, and extenuate the horror of cruelty. The tendency of mankind to degeneracy has been a common topic of declamation among Moralists and Poets. If the complaint be well founded, we ought at least, by getting rid as much as possible of the vices of our ancestors, to endeavour to compensate for the particulars in which we fall short of their virtues. But if antiquity shall be found to sanctify injustices, and reverence for former times to diminish the detestation of cruelty, if we shall conceive it to be a point of honour to throw a gloss over the crimes of our ancestors, while we are led from a sense of duty to their *manes*, to copy them into our own practice, then truly the prediction of the poet will be fulfilled:—

*"Ætas Parentum, pejor avis tulit*

*"Nos nequiores, mox daturos*

*"Progeniem vitiosorem."*

It was amusing enough, however, to hear the right honourable gentleman talk of this pious veneration for the memories of our ancestors, this charitable covering for their failings, and deprecate all harshness of obloquy, and general terms of condemnation as applied to the slave trade, which he had himself previously admitted to be inconsistent with justice and humanity. After this admission, it might have been supposed that few epithets could have been added of more severe obloquy, or more general condemnation. I shall certainly give my vote for the motion of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce.) The honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) objected that the trade ought not to be abolished immediately, and instanced Grenada, which was by no means in a state ripe for the abolition, and would require for that purpose a period as long as had been granted from the date of the former resolution. That was a point which would come regularly to be discussed in the Committee, and there if it should be found expedient, the period of

the abolition might be fixed for 1799. As to the plan of the right honourable gentleman to effect the abolition by calculations with respect to the ages of the negroes imported, I must remark, that those who think it impossible at once to abolish the trade, and yet conceive that the object may be effected by such regulations as these, strain at small difficulties, and swallow large ones. It has been stated, that it would be desirable for us to proceed with the concurrence of the gentlemen interested: experience, however, has shewn that we cannot hope to obtain it. We do not pretend to legislate for them on the point of emancipation, nor ought we, so far as relates to the abolition, to suffer them to legislate for us. The question is, whether the House, by its present decision, shall shew itself to have been hypocritical or honourable in its former declaration. It is even of more importance—it is whether the nation, after pretending to spend oceans of blood, and millions of money, in the cause of Religion, Social Order, and Humanity, shall continue to carry on this shameful and unprincipled traffic, and by a conduct so inconsistent with its professions, so injurious to its honour, shall incur the charge of the vilest simulation, or the most hardened effrontery. It is surely a point of no small importance, whether, under these circumstances, the Legislature shall permit, and to permit is in some cases to enjoin, the continuance of a trade, which, after a long and laborious investigation, they have pronounced to be inconsistent with Humanity and Justice. But the honourable Baronet (Sir William Young) has discovered a new reason why we should not agree to the abolition. He has said, that we must look to an indemnity for the expence we have incurred in the prosecution of the present war. And where are we to look for it? In the West Indies.—So that we shall want fresh cargoes of slaves, in order to cultivate our new territorial acquisitions, and so to render them productive as to constitute an adequate indemnity. So that it turns out at last, that the reward of those crusaders in the cause of Social Order, Justice, Religion and Humanity is to be an increased profit on the slave trade! I, for one, never can consent that the country should purchase an indemnity at such a price. Whether the motion shall succeed or not, I beg leave to express to the right honourable gentleman, my thanks for bringing it on, and my confidence that he will never suffer the question to rest till it is finally decided. If we are influenced by any sense of duty to ourselves, by any honourable principle of action, we will not suffer a session to pass over without bringing forward the subject for consideration. It is a subject which becomes peculiarly urgent from the situation of the West Indies. Whence arises our weakness in that quarter? Why are we

so extremely vulnerable on every side? From the existence of that abominable slave trade; which is as miserably impolitic as it is odiously unjust. The motion is for leave to bring in a bill to abolish the slave trade at a time to be limited. In the Committee I certainly shall vote for the earliest day that shall be proposed. It is now about eight or nine years since the subject was first brought forward, and if the House keep their word, they cannot avoid taking some decisive step. It was matter of joy to us, when we learned, that the slave trade was to be abolished in Denmark; but when afterwards we understood that the period of the abolition was not to take place till the year 1800, our satisfaction on the occasion was converted into contempt and ridicule. At present, I see no probability that the century will put an end to this shame of Great Britain. I cannot submit to sanction this infamous traffic by mere regulations; there are some things so bad, that even to regulate them, is in some measure to participate in their criminality. Let us send the bill to the House of Lords; if it is there rejected, let us send it up session after session. Satisfied with the grounds on which we have brought the measure forward, let the perseverance of our exertions correspond with the justice and humanity of our cause, and let us at least prove that we shall not be wanting to vindicate the honour of our character and the consistency of our proceedings.

Mr. ADDINGTON felt considerable embarrassment upon this subject. Had he had the honour of a seat in that House, he should have voted for the resolutions of 1792, because he was an enemy to the trade, and thought it ought to be abolished, but he thought it should be abolished gradually. An idea had occurred to him that it might be abolished by an improvement in the bill of an honourable Baronet (Sir W. Dolben) by making a rapid increase in the proportion of the tonnage of ships carrying slaves, so that it might soon become impossible to carry on the traffic.

Mr. BARHAM professed a desire to see the trade abolished, but thought it dangerous to attempt it at this time.

Mr. WILBERFORCE in a short reply summed up the arguments of his opponents, and re-stated what had already been urged in favour of the abolition.

The House divided,

For Mr. Wilberforce's motion	93,
Against it	67.

Leave being given to bring in the bill; Mr. Wilberforce, Sir W. Dolben, Mr. Sergeant Adair, Mr. Fox, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were ordered to prepare and bring it in.

*Friday, February 19th.*

General SMITH moved, " That copies of the orders and regulations sent by the Directors of the East India Company to their different Governments relative to the relief of their military officers, be laid before the House," which, after some conversation between General Smith and Mr. Secretary Dundas, was agreed to.

Mr. HOBART brought up the report of the Vote of Credit bill.

Mr. GREY said, that though he had uniformly opposed the present war, he had never opposed the supplies to carry it on. According to his understanding of the matter, the constitutional view on which the vote of credit was considered was, that after the estimates of the year were provided, a sum of money was entrusted to the discretion of Ministers to answer any extraordinary services that might occur during the recess of Parliament, and for which no precise provision could be made. For this reason it had been the unvariable practice to propose such a vote near the conclusion of the session. On this occasion he was surprised that the opposite course had been taken, and that at so early a period this provision should be settled. This circumstance convinced him of what he had heard insinuated, that the public expences were not fairly stated, and that the sums voted for the estimates of this year were to be applied to the deficiencies of last, and that this vote of credit was therefore called for at an unusual period, to be diverted to purposes totally different from its proper destination. He was informed that every department of Government, the Army, the Navy, the Ordnance, the Civil List, were all in arrear; and he was cautious, therefore, of putting into the hands of Ministers money that might not be applied to its true purpose. He would wish, if possible, that some regulation could be devised to extend to the application of prospective expences, for if Ministers did apply the sums raised by the vote of credit to the deficiencies with which the Public were unacquainted, the most valuable prerogative of the House, as stewards of the Public, would be violated. He would wish, for these reasons, that the consideration of the report should be postponed, and the bill recommitted; and though he would not divide the House upon it, he saw no disadvantage that could result from its adoption. He therefore moved, " that the report be taken into consideration this day three weeks."

Mr. ROSE admitted, that it was usual to call for the vote of credit at a later period of the session, and thought the objections,

though unimportant, might have been made earlier. He did not see that any harm could result from the application of the sums contained in the vote of credit to other objects than those alluded to by the honourable gentleman, and he believed such applications had been frequent. He was of opinion that much inconvenience would result from the delay proposed.

General SMITH said, that the thinness of the House, when immense sums of money were voted, made it impossible to state objections earlier. He viewed the subject in the same light with his honourable friend, and was glad it had been taken up. The public interest required that peculiar attention should be paid to the application of the supplies at such a period as this.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH wished the inconvenience that would result from delay to be explained.

After a few observations from Mr. Rose and Mr. Grey, the motion was negatived without a division.

Mr. GREY moved, "that accounts of the sums received on the loan of 1795, up to the 12th of September, 1795—of sums received for the Lottery of 1796—on the Land and Malt tax—the Vote of Credit of 1795, up to the same period, with various other money papers, should be laid on the table."—Agreed to.

Mr. BURTON moved, that the Westminster Police act should be read; which being done, he said, that after an experiment of the effects of that act which had at first been passed for a limited period, he now rose for leave to bring in a bill to render it perpetual. The object of the bill was well known, and the circumstances under which it had been introduced would be recollected. Formerly the Magistrates of Westminster were so despised, and their practices so disgraceful, that they received the appellation of trading justices, from the traffic in vice which they maintained, and the encouragement which they gave to the licentiousness of the lower classes of the people, whose irregularities they inflamed, and whose litigations they promoted for their own pecuniary advantage. They were in the use by their artifices to swell the number of disputes, and to foment disturbances, in order to increase the emoluments of their own situations. The number of recognizances which in the course of a year used to be entered, was about 20,000, which, under the present system, had decreased to a third of that number, and the commitments, upon which frequently nothing proceeded, had decreased in the same proportion. The sums which were levied upon the lowest classes of the people by the litigations in which they were encouraged, and the commitments on account of disturbances to which they were incited for pecuniary purposes, amounted

to no less than 6000*l.* annually, a sum now saved to those who were least able to sustain such a burden. The act which he moved for perpetuating had banished these mal-practices, and had established the police of the metropolis on the most favourable footing. With the experience they had of the purity of the administration of justice, in consequence of its operation, of the suppression of the depredations on the properties, and the diminution of danger to the persons of the members of the community, he was confident that the reasons for maintaining it were rendered indisputable from the salutary effect it had produced.

LORD WILLIAM RUSSELL said, that he would state very shortly the reasons which induced him to give his negative to the present motion. The bill had been resisted upon its first introduction by a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) no longer on that side of the House, and the same arguments that formerly had been used remained the same, or were strengthened, when the duration of the bill was considered. At first it had been only defended upon the plea of necessity, and of the danger that arose from the number of robberies and depredations. Notwithstanding the operation of this act, it did not appear that the number of robberies was diminished, as the daily papers were filled with accounts of such attempts, and the complaints of them were frequent. The patronage of the Crown was increased by it, in a very uncommon degree, and in a very exceptionable manner. The persons who enjoy the office of justices were appointed by the Crown, removeable at pleasure, and naturally possessed a great influence over the people, which might be exercised whenever Government might chuse to direct. The bill itself conferred a power unknown to the Constitution, as, by the oath of a single individual, any man in the kingdom might be taken up as a vagrant or pickpocket, and thus be exposed to all the horrors of imprisonment. It encouraged perjury, for by the act, it was difficult to convict a person of this crime, and by this means tended to lessen the moral veneration and imposing solemnity of an oath. The expence which this act occasioned was likewise deserving serious attention; and upon the whole he was decidedly hostile to the measure, and would take every opportunity to oppose it.

The SECRETARY AT WAR said, he perhaps would have been silent on the subject, had he not been personally alluded to by the Noble Lord. It was true he had opposed the measure on its first introduction in a general way: but his principal objection was to that part of it by which any man might be committed as a vagrant or pickpocket upon the single oath of an individual. Upon this



head his objections were not removed, and his general sentiments of the bill were not altered. What he had thought of it formerly, he thought still. Then it was only an experiment, which seemed to have perfectly succeeded, and upon that experience he was of opinion that it ought to be continued. The persons who exercised the office of Justice of the Peace under it, were men of the greatest respectability, some of whom he personally knew, and others by character, and he was convinced that they all discharged their duty with the utmost fidelity and attention. It was evident that the police of the metropolis had been improved by this act. It was no doubt true that patronage was annexed to the Crown; but every measure of a similar nature would have the same effect; nor was this consideration to be put in competition with the advantage of a regular, vigilant, and active police. Even when the former Justices subsisted the same complaint of influence was used. Upon the whole he was persuaded the measure was useful, and though he could be glad that the clause to which he objected could be removed, yet this was not sufficient to justify the rejection of a plan which had already produced the most beneficial effects.

General SMITH was decidedly against the bill; the precedent it created was bad, and might be employed for the worst purposes. Though he had originally voted for it, in the change of circumstances that had taken place, he would now give it his negative. The acts that had lately passed conferred upon magistrates a degree of power which was highly dangerous; but which, when Justices dependent upon the Crown were called to exercise, there was little impartiality or freedom to be expected.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that it was necessary in the metropolis to pay persons for the performance of the duty of a Justice, because the office could not be exercised as in the country, for the consequence attached to it, and therefore men who would otherwise support themselves in a professional pursuit, were to be induced to undertake a task as a means of subsistence, which otherwise their avocations would not permit them to fulfil. The great object was to find proper magistrates, and they could not be procured but by making the situation respectable. As to the expence he differed entirely with the gentlemen on the other side, and thought the salaries of Justices too small, and on a future occasion he intended to move for their increase.

Mr. I. HAWKINS BROWNE spoke in favour of the bill.

Mr. M. ROBINSON reprobated the bill, and contended, that it was founded upon that desire to extend the influence of the Crown, which characterised every act of the present Minister's administration.

Mr. FOX said he was sorry that the right honourable gentleman opposite to him (Mr. Windham) had so totally altered his opinion of the present measure. He had formerly opposed the bill, but now the objection which he then so powerfully insisted upon had decreased in importance, and he was ready to compromise those principles of justice he had so strongly urged, to a motive of convenience which he now began to discover. He was likewise sorry at the change, because he had expected that the right honourable gentleman would have joined in opposition to the measure with that additional weight which resulted from his official situation. The patronage which it conferred upon the Crown was to him a matter of infinite consequence. He would not enter into a comparison of the respective modes in which the influence of the Crown was increased, or the particular importance of the instances: perhaps to some it appeared already so immense, that a new accession was hardly deserving of observation. He, however, was of a different opinion. He thought that so much was derived from the money transactions to which the state of our finances gave rise, so much from the creation of new offices, that every addition should be carefully watched and firmly opposed. Sorry he was to see that lately the useless appendage of law clerk to the Secretary of State's office had been revived, and bestowed upon a person for whom he had, a high personal respect, a consideration which he would not allow to influence his judgement of the transaction. But has the bill in question succeeded in its object? He would be happy to hear so, though he should at the same time be surprised. Has there been any decrease in the number of robberies? On the contrary we heard of them every day, and some of the most atrocious nature. The war, terrible as its effects might be, produced this good effect, that it diminished the number of profligate and disorderly persons in the metropolis, and to this might be attributed any improvement that had appeared. The diminution of the number of recognizances, though true, did not prove that robberies were less frequent. Some part of his objection to the bill would be removed, if the clause relative to the commitment on the oath of any individual were omitted, though this would by no means reconcile him to the spirit of the bill. The evil of the influence of the Crown would remain an objection which could not easily be obviated. The regulation of the police in the metropolis was important, as it in some measure served to guide the opinion of the rest of the country, and therefore should be guarded from influence. Every mode of administering justice in some measure added to the influence of the Crown, but this act in a particular manner. It would be very desirable if

the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Middlesex could be made a responsible character, and appointed to superintend the conduct of the Justices. That office was unoccupied when the bill first passed, but now was held by a person of the highest character. He was sorry he had not heard the opening of the honourable gentleman who made the motion, as he could not know the grounds on which he recommended the measure; but, if he stated that the number of robberies was diminished, he could not subscribe to an opinion so contrary to appearances. Even were this the case, however, he could not assent to the bill. Some other measure might be devised to attain the same end, without being liable to the same objections.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the right honourable gentleman had followed indeed, with some more moderation, the high-flown observations of the honourable gentleman who preceded him, upon the topics of the increasing influence of the Crown. To this he would not at present reply, but when the subject was specially brought forward, he was ready to meet them upon the point. It was a clear proposition that the lives and properties of the people could not be protected without, in some degree, enlarging the power of the Executive Government, to which, by the Constitution, this department belonged. The general declamation which had been uttered, then, only went to this, that unless all magistracies were abolished, influence could not be extirpated. The right honourable gentleman in the course of his observations, talked of other measures being adopted, but had never done any thing like proposing any plan, except when he said that the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Middlesex should be made to superintend the conduct of the Magistrates. When the bill was introduced there was indeed no Lord Lieutenant, but there were persons who performed the duties annexed to that situation, yet the complaints against their conduct at that time were loud and general. While the right honourable gentleman thus hinted at a mode by which the magistrates might be superintended, he did not know how good ones were to be obtained under the circumstances that prevailed previous to this act. But the same dependance formerly existed among the Justices. Government enjoyed the same patronage, while the character of the Magistrates rendered them the fittest instruments of improper purposes. With respect to the clause objected to, it certainly deserved attention, and if the object of the bill could be effected without it, he should be very glad to lay it aside. It had been said that robberies prevailed still. This, however, only proved that it had not entirely suppressed robbery; yet if it had produced

the advantages already enumerated, no sober or dispassionate man could hesitate in giving it his support.

Mr. GREY said that he could not help taking up the arrogant challenge which the right honourable gentleman had thrown out in the beginning of his speech. He would undertake to prove that the system of influence in the hands of the present Ministry, was carried to a height unknown in any former period. He would prove that the revival of the office of third Secretary of State, and the creation of other new offices, cost more than twice the sum which was saved to the public by the act called Mr. Burke's bill, which the right honourable gentleman himself had so strenuously supported. He took a view then of the bill, and contended that it was highly dangerous, in point of influence especially, when coupled with such acts as those which had lately been passed.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that at the period when the bill was first introduced, universal complaints prevailed of the danger of robberies, complaints that were every day made at the Secretary of State's office, none of which now were heard of. He was surprised to hear it said, that no improvement in this respect had taken place in the situation of the metropolis. The right honourable gentleman had alluded to atrocious robberies, but he did not advert that these were no ways connected with the operation of this bill, and were perpetrated beyond the jurisdiction of the Justices. They would not complain surely that the activity of the Magistrates had banished these depredators from the capital, and driven them in greater numbers to the country. It was indisputable that pickpockets and other persons of this description were no longer such nuisances to places of public resort as formerly, and that in many respects the state of the police was improved. No bad effects had resulted from the particular clause against which some objections were entertained. The oath was a solemn one, and it was not to be dreaded it would be lightly taken. It had already tended to disperse those assemblies of pickpockets which had been formerly so troublesome, and reduced them to the greatest apprehension from the interference of the police officers.—Much had been said of the facility of devising a plan free from such objections as the present; but since no plan had been offered by the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) who was bound to do every thing for the accommodation of his constituents, and whose abilities qualified him so eminently to perform the task, had it been practicable; this of itself was a convincing proof that no such plan could be suggested. He would therefore support the motion.

The question was then put, and the motion carried without a

division. Mr. Secretary Dundas, Mr. Burton, and Mr. Wilberforce, were appointed to prepare and bring in the bill.

*Monday February, 22d.*

General SMITH, understanding that the tax on printed cottons was to be substituted by another, thought the House should be made acquainted with the reasons on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had altered his opinion. The House having agreed to the tax, had certainly a right, he conceived, to an explanation on that subject, as they were no way privy to the conversation that took place between the Minister and the merchants concerned.

Mr. Chancellor PITT thought the explanation required would come more properly when he proposed a substitute for the tax.

Mr. WHITBREAD observed, that Mr. Pitt's notice relative to the alteration of the poor laws, which was given the other night in his absence, superseded the necessity of any farther motion on his part. He took for granted, that the alteration proposed was in conformity to ideas thrown out by Mr. Pitt in the debate which lately took place on that subject, and therefore was ready to promise every support in his power to the motion. The right honourable gentleman's notice seemed to intimate a change of opinion as to the time when the alteration suggested was proper, for, unless he had mis-conceived him on the night of the debate, he had then expressed an opinion, that an immediate change of the poor laws would be very improper. Whether he himself was mistaken in that conception, or whether the right honourable gentleman had so changed his opinion, he was equally rejoiced to find, that the House not only looked with compassion on the sufferings of the poor, but were likely to adopt speedy and effectual means of relieving them. As preparatory to the investigation of Mr. Pitt's motion, he concluded by moving, "That the 5th of Elizabeth, and the 21st of James I. the two fundamental statutes concerning the poor, be now read, and referred to the consideration of the House on Wednesday se'nnight," the day on which Mr. Pitt had given notice of his intention to bring forward his motion.

Agreed to.

Mr. WILBERFORCE brought up the bill for abolishing the slave trade at a time to be limited, pursuant to the Resolution of the Committee of the whole House on Thursday last. It was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Thursday se'nnight, for which day Mr. Grey's motion on the State of the Nation stood; but in order to prevent any delay of this important measure, he agreed to postpone his motion till next Monday week.

The order of the day was read for the third reading of the Vote of Credit bill.

Mr. GREY stated, that on Friday last he had taken notice of the irregularity of introducing a vote of credit at so early a period of the session, when he was informed that his objections would come with more propriety, when the right honourable gentleman opposite was present, and that great inconvenience was likely to result from the delay which he proposed. As he thought the business required some explanation, he restated what he then urged, that in the first place a vote of credit was usually passed to provide for some extraordinary or unforeseen expence which had been incurred, when Parliament was not sitting, which in such case would be specifically stated; or for some expences likely to be incurred when Parliament was not sitting, which were not foreseen at the time the estimates were made out and laid before them; and in such cases, that it was the uniform practice to make it the last business of the session. He had taken the pains to examine the form and manner of former votes of credit, and he found, that from the year 1756, which was at the time of the war before the last, as well as during the American war, no vote of credit was ever introduced till a few days before the end of the session. When the present vote of credit therefore was brought forward at this early period, and when one-fourth of the taxes was yet to be provided for, he had strong reasons to suspect that the House was not called upon to provide for any prospective incidents, but for past occurrences; and he was the more strongly confirmed in this opinion by the declaration of the honourable gentleman who answered him on Friday (Mr. Rose) that delay would be attended with inconvenience. Now, it was not only with regard to the time in which this demand was made that he was desirous to call the attention of the House, but to the magnitude of the amount. In the war of 1756, as well as in the American war, no greater demand was ever made than for one million of money as a vote of credit; but of late it had been the practice to increase that demand to the extravagant sum of 2,500,000*l*. By granting money in this random manner, the House was depriving itself of its peculiar prerogative to guard the public purse, while it made it less necessary for Ministers to be accurate in their accounts. It was his intention, therefore, to move for a delay of the question, to give the House an opportunity of considering the subject. If the supplies were not sufficient for the purposes they are designed for, let Ministers come down to the House with a new budget, and state the estimates in a formal and constitutional manner, that the Public may have some idea of the appropriation of those sums which they

are called upon to pay. This bill, however, appeared to be founded neither upon expedience nor constitutional principles, and he therefore moved, "that the third reading of it be postponed till that day three weeks."

Mr. Chancellor PITT believed it might be true that a vote of credit was not usually applied for till the end of the session; and that it was then done after the committee of supply was closed. He conceived, however, that, when the extraordinary expences were foreseen, the most regular way was to apply for it when the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means were open. In the first place, when it was applied for after the sittings of Parliament, it was, as the honourable gentleman observed, to defray some extraordinary expences which had not been calculated at the time the estimates were produced; and in the second place, to enable His Majesty, after the sittings of Parliament, to discharge any extraordinary expences which might possibly occur. Now if these extraordinary expences be foreseen, while the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means are open, he thought Ministers did no less than their constitutional duty in making an early application, that Parliament might consider the subject, and that no time might be lost to put the designs for which this money might be intended into immediate execution. At the same time he thought it better to be beforehand, in case of any possible emergency, than to let such expences stand over to the next year's accounts; especially since Ministers were accountable at all times for the expenditure. The vote of credit was this year therefore stated as an article of supply, and might be applicable or not, as the exigencies of the case required; like any other public fund, while it would constitute a sort of floating capital, instead of remaining an article of unfunded debt to be thrown into the accounts of another year. As to the application of it, upon which some objections were founded, he could only say that if it was applied to the discharge of expences already incurred, and which must be somehow or other defrayed, he thought it extremely right, and that if Ministers kept it back they would be culpable; as one common purse was better able to satisfy the demands upon the Public, than when sums were appropriated separately and distinctly, and reserved for a long time without any use whatever, until the period arrived, however distant and remote, for their specification. As to the measure itself, he thought it singular that no objection should be urged till the third reading of the bill, especially when he recollected that the message was brought down upon a day when there was a full attendance.

Mr. FOX thought the House was indebted to his honourable

friend for bringing his objections forward, and like him he thought the vote of credit required more explanation than it had hitherto received, to reconcile the House and Public to the measure. The right honourable gentleman, he observed, had confounded what was separate and distinct, for he considered a vote of credit in a Committee of Supply, as more eligible than towards the end of a session. A vote of credit was to provide for, as had been stated, expences incurred when Parliament was not sitting, and was either applied to circumstances unforeseen, or intended for such as might probably occur; but if there was a probability of applying it to any new service, the right honourable gentleman ought to come down to the House and state it. But the right honourable gentleman thought that a greater advantage would accrue from making one fund of the estimates and vote of credit, than having separate funds remain useless, till the services for which they were peculiarly appropriated should need them. Here he stopped *in limine* to remind the right honourable gentleman, that in a vote of credit the money was not issued till it is wanted; and that for all the common current expences of the year, the money purposely provided according to the given estimates was ready. Any person would think, from the right honourable gentleman's seeming regularity, that none of the departments were ever in arrear. He seemed to have forgotten that the Ordnance is in arrear, that the Navy is in arrear, that the Civil list is in arrear, and in short, that arrears were never so complained of as at present. The Staff has been provided for upon the estimates, and how was the House to think the provisions had been appropriated? There are Staff Officers returned from abroad, who, since the year 1793, have not received one shilling. People would be led to suppose that there is no irregularity, when the direct reverse is the fact; and except in a few particular arrangements under Lord Moira, there are arrears due to every officer in the army. Thus was an evil of the greatest magnitude produced, and the House of Commons did not comply with the laws of their country, if they permitted it. By the laws established, the accounts ought to be separate, and the money appropriated to the use of each particular service kept distinct. Does not the present mode lead to confusion, and does it not also lead us to suffer the whole of what is voted to be expended in a shorter time, and with greater waste and extravagance than it otherwise would be? If the war goes on, Parliament ought to know not only the quantum, but the exact items of its expenditure, and that distinctly. It was intimated that the money was wanted immediately, but he bade the House recollect that a vote of credit was never applied to the deficiency of esti-



mates, and in that way he contended the present vote of credit was neither consistent with his own opinion, nor the opinion of his honourable friend, nor was it consistent with the laws of the country. And if such a system were pursued, we might always expect to be in our present situation of arrear.

Mr. SHERIDAN remarked, that it tended to destroy the power of the House of Commons over the public purse, as well as the jealousy which in all cases of public expenditure they should be cautious to preserve. It was the peculiar privilege of that House always to vote the money for the public services upon estimates which were to be calculated as nearly as possible to the several demands of the several departments, and in cases of war and emergency at the end of a session to provide for any extraordinary incident by a vote of credit. He observed that the right honourable gentleman had very studiously passed over one objection of his honourable friend who made the motion for delay, which was the magnitude of the present demand when compared with what had been the case under former administrations. Till the right honourable gentleman introduced the practice, a vote of credit never exceeded the sum of one million, and if he goes on doubling at this rate, unnoticed and unchecked, why may he not next year, if the war continues, come down for five millions at once. He understood that the right honourable gentleman made no manner of distinction between the money granted by a vote of credit, and that granted upon the estimates for the common current expences of the year. In this case the estimates are no longer of any use, since there is no certainty of appropriation. By the laws of his country, the right honourable gentleman, and every other Minister, was bound not to apply the money voted upon any specific estimate to another purpose, and constitutionally he could not do it. Yet according to his own account, he puts all the money into one purse, and makes use of it as occasion needs. Now, to shew how opposite such a mode of proceeding is to the very plea upon which the money was required, he desired the preamble to the bill to be read. This being done, Mr. Sheridan observed, that upon that plea, it was to defray some unforeseen expences. He owned that the delay of the bill might create much inconvenience, but that inconvenience was the lesser evil of the two, and he was therefore resolved to take the sense of the House upon it.

The House then divided,

For Mr. Grey's motion,	-	-	25
Against it,	-	-	102
Majority,			—77

The bill was then read a third time and passed.

Mr. SHERIDAN gave notice, that soon after his honourable friend had made his motion concerning the expences of the war, he should specifically move for an inquiry into the conduct of the expedition to the West-Indies. Upon a former occasion the right honourable gentleman had invited it, and expressed himself ready to meet it, and he hoped the House was not so benumbed by despair and disappointment, as to suffer an affair so replete with disaster and disgrace, to pass unnoticed.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH, before he came to the immediate discussion of the negotiation of the loan, in which, for the third time, though reluctantly, he obtruded himself upon the time and patience of the House, begged leave to say a word or two upon the Report, which, as the House would see, was pretty voluminous, owing to the repetition of similar questions and answers relative to persons upon the list of subscribers. It might appear extraordinary to many gentlemen who had formerly remarked, that he completely liberated the right honourable gentleman from any charge of personal corruption, that he should enter into that examination; but to remove every kind of prejudice on that score, he assured the House that that examination was not instituted by him, but by another honourable gentleman then present, nor did he thence draw any inference of corruption, nor was he at all concerned in that examination. There was one view in which he considered the business, which would prevent him from fixing any such charge as that to which he alluded, on Ministers. If it were necessary for them to have recourse to corruption, with the power they have in their hands, they would not act so clumsily, as to make the negotiation of a loan the instrument of their venality. They would not have had recourse to means that would subject them to exposure, when they had an establishment, whose gigantic influence surpassed all former example.—With respect to the loan, nothing was more distant from his mind than to accuse Ministers of corruption. But there was this, however, to be said, where there were such enormous profits on a loan, as those to which he would, in the course of his speech, have occasion to recur, that it must be admitted, those who were favoured, would be apt to support and abet a war, from the profits of which they derive such enormous advantages. This he begged to be considered as a general observation, as he did not wish to cast the slightest imputation on any of the contributors to the loan, among whom there were several who were incapable of being influenced by any mean or fordid motive. He mentioned however as a singular circumstance, that among those persons who signed the requisition for the meeting at Grocer's hall, and addressed

the House in favour of the two bills, a sum of not less than 800,000*l.* was divided, from which they derived a profit of not less than 90,000*l.* There were certainly among these a number of respectable merchants, and from respectable merchants only such contributions could have been obtained; but at the same time, he would not pretend to deny that such profits might operate on men's minds to be blind to their own ultimate interests, and the interests of their country. To enter into the negotiation itself, every body agreed with the right honourable gentleman, and those gentlemen who had delivered their opinion upon it, that a fair and open competition ought always to be encouraged. Now it would appear, from the testimony of every person in the Report, that in last Autumn, from October to the 23d of November, a competition was invariably persisted in, notwithstanding some allusions to a claim of preference addressed by Mr. Boyd to the right honourable gentleman in the month of October, and that an open competition was formally announced in the month of November by the Governor of the Bank. After this, it would be natural to inquire how and why it was abandoned. It appeared to have been abandoned on the ground of a claim made by Mr. Boyd and Co. upon the right of preference, and although this right had been claimed in a short conversation between Mr. Boyd and the right honourable gentleman in the month of October, the right honourable gentleman was then determined to admit no claim whatever. Thus it rested till after the 23d of November, without any farther discussion or application to the right honourable gentleman upon it. On the 23d of November, however, the open competition was announced, when Mr. Boyd began to be alarmed; and on the 24th he had an interview, when he stated his claim more particularly, and afterwards put it down in writing. The letter which contained it was copied in the Appendix to the Report, No. 3. and Mr. Smith said, he should advert to a point or two respecting the validity of the claim, which was founded on a promise of the right honourable gentleman that no other public loan for this country should be made until the period fixed for the last payment of the preceding loan should have elapsed. Now, Mr. Boyd asserted in his letter, that "this was not one of those rights of which litigious people sometimes avail themselves for the mere purpose of giving trouble, but it was a right which was founded on justice and the nature of things, recognized by constant practice and public opinion, and which he could not relinquish without evident loss." And again he stated, "That this might appear perfectly clear, he begged leave to state that there was at that moment still floating in the market the value of

5,000,000*l.* of money in scrip, which remained to be converted into stock. Now, Mr. Smith said, he could shew as many mistakes, in point of confusion in these passages, as there were mis-statements in point of fact, notwithstanding the palpable care and pains bestowed in writing it. In the first place it was an extraordinary assertion of the contractor to say, that his claim was a right founded in justice and the nature of things, and recognised by constant practice and public opinion. He asked the House *prima facie* whether Mr. Boyd could imagine the right honourable gentleman so ignorant of the practice of bargaining for loans, after having been so long and repeatedly in the habit of it, as to believe this assertion?—For once he would be on the side of the right honourable gentleman, and maintain that he could not. But, in order to shew this was the case, the contractor asserted, that there was at that moment still floating in the market the value of five millions of money in scrip, which remained to be converted into stock. Now not to say that not one syllable of this was true, it was the most extraordinary claim he ever heard of, as would appear by the whole of Mr. Boyd's evidence. He then recapitulated the state of the market on the 24th November, to shew that instead of five millions of scrip of the preceding loan remaining, there was not more than 2,300,000*l.* upon which the greatest loss would have been 445,718*l.* the whole of which he contended ought to have been given up rather than enter into a negotiation, which has been of greater loss to the public. He observed that Mr. Boyd maintained a separate right from the other contributors which he was not able to prove in any part of his evidence, and the only grounds on which he claimed it were the risk, trouble and duty of the original contractors. Mr. Smith was at a loss to find what the duty of the original contractor was, unless it was to see that the Minister fulfilled his contract; and with respect to the trouble, the only trouble he knew was the selection of such of his friends, upon whom he meant to confer the favour of putting their names down to his list of subscribers, and accepting or rejecting the solicitations of other people. He found no trouble however in providing this loan of eighteen millions, for the whole capital was not sufficient to meet the numerous solicitations of his friends to shower down his benefits upon them. He had the trouble, to be sure, of waiting upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he supposed he did not think much of that, since he thereby had the power to choose how much of the contract he would keep himself, and how much he would divide among his friends, according to the advantages that were likely to arise from the bargain. As to the risk, there was only risk in one point, which if the loan fell

below ten per cent. discount, the contractors would be obliged to fulfil their engagement when the contributors would be released if they had made the first payment, for Mr. Giles, the Deputy-Governor of the Bank, being asked, "Is not all risk to the contractors from the sub-subscribers at an end when that deposit has been paid?" replied, "Certainly not, for if the loan was to fall under ten per cent. which is generally the amount of the first payment, the contractors would undoubtedly be responsible to the public. He had known it fall six per cent. but the risk was then not worth mentioning." And here, said Mr. Smith, I appeal to the country, if by any extraordinary and unforeseen accident the loan should fall to such an enormous discount as would ruin him and his friends, if it was insisted that they should fulfil their bargain—could it be imagined that the country would insist on the bargain—no certainly—if it did, they would not be able to pay, neither if they could, was it a clear point that they could be obliged. Such was the superstructure on which Mr. Boyd built his claims to a right of preference. He next came to the negotiation of a loan. The negotiation of a loan throws down the price of the existing funds, so soon as it is talked of, because the preparations and the sales affect the price of stocks principally and materially. Mr. Boyd himself said, that the first payment of a new loan was commonly more than was necessary; while Mr. Giles and Mr. Mellish were both of opinion that the knowledge that a loan to any given extent is coming into the market, affects the price of the existing funds. He now desired the House to compare, in what manner the holders of scrip were affected upon the negotiation of a new loan before the last payment of the old loan, as it applies to the answer given by Mr. Boyd. In 1794, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer bargained for a new loan with Mr. Boyd, he bargained for it a month previous to the last payments of Messrs. Morgan and Angerstein who were the contractors for the preceding loan, and in December, 1794, the funds were materially affected by the first payment of the new loan. Did Mr. Boyd then think such a conduct improper, and contrary to justice, to constant practice, and public opinion? Certainly not, at least he betrayed no symptoms. Did the right honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer think it improper? Certainly not, for he betrayed no symptoms neither, of entertaining such sentiments. But how contrary was the conduct of the contractors at that period to that of Mr. Boyd on the present occasion. They felt no alarm, nor did they make any objection to it, and the reason was, because they considered their loan as wound up. In the present instance we must recollect also that three parties

met as competitors, and consequently the value of the existing funds must have been more depressed than if there had been but one contractor. No person would presume to dispute or deny this, nor was there any immediate pressure for the first payment; for although the terms were concluded upon the 25th of November, the subscribers were not called upon to make good their first payment till the 10th of December following; near a fortnight therefore intervened. It may be alledged that the public service wanted money; but it is evident from this that it did not press for it immediately; and thence another consideration was to be deduced—it is always customary to bargain for a loan only two or three days before the opening of the budget, and it has often happened that an interview did not take place between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the contractors till the very day before that on which the budget was to open, and it has been usually the practice to require the first payment in two, three, or four days after at the farthest. Now what was the longest period for the Minister to have waited before he had it in his power to bargain for a new loan, conformably with his former engagement, and to the saving of so much money to the public. The utmost period to have waited, would have been till the 15th of January, or if he had been urgent for money he might have come before Parliament, and stated that three persons had offered themselves as competitors, together with the peculiar nature of his former engagements, and obtained a Vote of Credit. Could such a declaration have injured the public cause? On the contrary would it not have excited an idea of astonishment and admiration throughout Europe at our internal wealth and credit, that three persons should come forward at one time, and offer separately to negotiate a loan of eighteen millions of money, and that we were precluded from accepting their proposals by regard to punctilio? Some persons might say that a vote of credit at such an early period of the session, and for retrospective services in part, would have been irregular and unconstitutional. Suppose it could not have been done by a vote of credit, then it might by a short loan of two or three millions; but then again he was aware that if Mr. Boyd objected to the negotiation of a large loan, he might to a small one. He then read the copy of a letter from Mr. Morgan, stating that in October, 1795, he was ready to raise five millions, if necessary. Now every person would have thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer warranted in such a situation to go to the extent of two millions at least, which is the ninth part of eighteen millions, whereby he would still have had the choice of competition, and a great part of the present bonus would have been saved to the public.

The goodness of the terms became the next subject of consideration. Now he acknowledged that the terms were to be relatively viewed. It will often happen that the terms of a loan will be good at one time for the contractor, and at another for the public; but we have authority that the terms are fair for both, when the bonus is a little under or a little over four per cent. The terms when the last loan came out were seven and a quarter premium. It was at six before the opening of the budget, at five and a half at the first negotiation, and immediately after it, rose to six, and fluctuated to six and a half and six. He denied at the same time that there was any alteration in the funds, and regretted, when he wished the other day to have an authentic account of the price of stocks, that the right honourable gentleman did not appear very good humoured, but answered him with more warmth than the occasion seemed to require, that it was impracticable. He had since learned that there is an authentic account published at one o'clock every day by Messrs. Cole and Templeman, which is sent to the Bank and registered, and which might have been laid upon the table. He had not got that, but he had another, which he believed was equally correct. It appeared by this, that on the day the budget was opened the stocks were at the same price as on the 25th November; and that on Monday, December the 7th, the 3 per cent. consols were  $67\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and that they afterwards rose above 5-8ths per cent. notwithstanding the circumstances to depress them. He did not wish to contend about the 5-8ths, because in this interim the loan was legalized, but he confined himself merely to stating that the transfers of omnium had the effect to raise them in their value. Now it was evident from this statement that if it came out at seven per cent. premium it stood at three per cent. more than usual, and the consequent inference was that the terms were bad 4l. 13s. 6d. was the money raised nominally per cent, but in addition there was a discount of three per cent. He would not contend but it might be 4l. 13s. 6d. if it was afterwards allowed him to be 4l. 17s. 10d. Mr. Boyd himself stated the bonus to be 6l. 15s. 9d. per cent. and therefore it was not surprising that he should call it a bad bargain for the public, when the calculator made it so much above the usual rate. By the memorandum at the end of the Report, the difference on 65 and  $67\frac{1}{2}$  amounts to 3l. 12s. 6d. which makes the bonus 6l. 15s. 9d. Laying these circumstances together, it was clear that more had been given to the contractors than usual, and that the whole was a bad bargain. He apologised for insisting so much upon this subject, since it was so dry and unpleasant in its nature, and wished that other gentlemen would consider it a little, as with

five minutes attention they would be as equal to speak upon it as he was. He then briefly stated a transaction which came before the Committee, and upon which they wished to institute an inquiry respecting a change from the 3 per cent. consols, to the 4 per cent. annuities, which he considered as prejudicial. In another view the negotiation was bad, because it might have been better. He alluded to the proposals of Mr. Morgan, and stated, that it had come to his knowledge since he had brought up the Report, and he was ready to prove it by evidence at the bar of the House, that one man offered to change 5000*l.* in Mr. Morgan's list before the terms were settled, for 3000*l.* in Mr. Boyd's list, and another offered three for one, for it was then understood that Mr. Boyd would have the preferable terms. Whether the Austrian loan was to come forward he did not know; he hoped not; but he wished to know how much of the navy debt was to be funded? In every way he estimated the public loss at a very considerable sum; for by the bringing down of the King's message on the day after the opening of the budget the right honourable gentleman caused an advance of profit upon the loan to the amount of 900,000*l.* sterling. Whether the purport of that message was foreseen on the 25th of November he could not tell, but he blamed the right honourable gentleman, because he had no occasion to have settled the terms of the loan before the 5th of December, which was conformable to the ordinary course of things, and on that day he might possibly have ascertained whether such a message would have been brought down or not, for Mr. Smith knew to a certainty that on Monday the 7th, when the budget was opened, a person in a public Coffee-house informed the company that a message would be sent down to the House that day, containing His Majesty's recognition of the French Republic; and when he was afterwards informed that no such circumstance had happened, he seemed surprised, and attributed it to some odd accident. The next day, however, verified his declaration. If therefore, the circumstance of the message was so public, it must evidently have been for some days before in the contemplation of Ministers. He did not mean to make any imputations of corruption, but he thought the advantages to the public, if there were any by the present bargain, might have been greatly improved. In the course of his argument, he quoted the defence of Mr. Dundas, then Lord Advocate for Scotland, to an accusation against Lord North, of making a corrupt loan. [See Parliamentary Register for 1781, vol. 3, page 345.] He next touched upon the bills antedated from Hamburgh, but drawn upon unstamped paper in London on the Treasury, by Mr. Walter Boyd, jun. What degree of preference



might arise from this accommodation, Mr. Smith said, it was not for him to determine.

Mr. Boyd had positively denied, in his evidence, that he assumed any merit, or formed any claim to the present loan, from the accommodation he had given to Government in that instance. Other gentlemen, however, who were examined as to that particular, admitted that at least in that transaction, there was nothing likely to preclude or weaken Mr. Boyd's claims.

Mr. Smith then proceeded to examine the mode of concluding the bargain between the Minister and Mr. Boyd. From its privacy, he shewed that it was of all others the most unpleasant and suspicious. It involved a responsibility, which no Minister, except for particular reasons, could wish to undertake, since he subjected himself, according to the nature of the bargain, either to the imputation of having acted unfairly for the Public, if he granted too favourable terms to the contractor; or ungenerously to the contractor, if he took any undue advantage for the Public at his expence. Mr. Smith having gone through the detail of facts, proceeded to draw one or two general conclusions. When he considered the amount of the late loans, the object of the liquidation of the public debt, which had been theoretically held out, appeared to be practically impossible. We had lately added to the mass no less a sum than forty-eight millions. If such had been the effect of so short a period of war, when we considered how much Europe had been engaged in wars since the beginning of this century, and how little prospect there was that they would in future be discontinued, any prospect of the liquidation of the immense load of public debt must appear to be altogether impracticable, or at least to be removed to an indefinite period. It was to be recollected that one year's warfare completely controverts the effect of twelve years of peace. To indulge the hope at all of a total liquidation of the national debt, we must depend on keeping up the present enormous portion of taxes, without any future wars to plunge us deeper into embarrassments; and after what he had seen in the present year of the difficulty of levying new imposts, he feared we should never be able to maintain them. God grant we may, for unfortunately the fear is great. From the tendency of the burden to increase, it was one of which it did not seem likely that our posterity would be easily able to get rid.

“ ————— *Multos-que per annos*

“ *Multa virum volvens durando sæcula vincit.*”

Mr. Smith next remarked the bad effect of loans, such as the present, on a commercial country. They held out the hope of

sudden and immense gains; they induced men to forsake the sober tract of slowly productive industry for the more dazzling prospects of monied speculation. He mentioned, that some years since, when he had been in Holland, several mercantile men had complained to him of the decline of their commerce in consequence of the persons who had large capitals having taken their property out of trade, and turned their attention to speculations in money. Such speculations tended to enrich individuals, but to impoverish the country. They threw the small profits of the many into the pockets of the few; those who had once tasted of the profits of such transactions were afterwards but little inclined to engage in the pursuits of commerce. They thought of nothing but how they might still more improve the money they had gained in that way, by continuing to employ it in the same channel. Mr. Smith concluded by apologizing for the length of time, during which, from the nature of the subject, he had necessarily detained the House. He said that he would now move a string of resolutions of facts arising out of the Report. As they were very numerous and not very short, he would have them now read, and then leave to the discretion of the House, whether they should immediately proceed to the discussion, or allow them first to be printed, and appoint a future day for their consideration. Mr. Smith then read the resolutions, which are as follow:

Resolved,

1st. That it appears to this House, that the principle of making loans for the public service by free and open competition, uniformly professed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been very generally recognized, as affording the fairest prospect of public advantage.

2d. That it appears to this House, that, in all the communications relative to the formation of the late loan, which passed between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Governor of the Bank of England, or any of the parties concerned, previous to the 24th of November last, the Chancellor of the Exchequer did invariably profess a resolution to adhere strictly to the principle of free and open competition.

3d. That it appears to this House, that, on the 25th of November, 1795, the day appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a meeting of the several competitors for the loan, to settle the preliminaries thereof, and when they were all assembled, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, after a separate conference with Messrs. Boyd and his party, did propose to the other competitors, viz. Mellish and Morgan, to bid for the loan, "on condition that an option should be reserved to the party of Boyd, of taking the loan at such a price as should be equal in value to one half per cent. on the whole sum borrowed, above the highest offer of the competitors."

4th. That it appears to this House, that the said Mellish and Morgan having refused to become competitors on a condition to which they deemed it almost impossible to submit, the Chancellor of the Exchequer

did immediately after, without proposing any other terms, agree for the loan with Boyd and his party, although it was understood by the parties, that they were not to come to final settlement on that day.

5th. That it appears to this House, that by giving this preference to Boyd and his party, the Chancellor of the Exchequer did totally depart from the principle of free and open competition, after having, by a communication, through the Governor of the Bank, only two days preceding, expressly invited persons to bid on that principle, and who had also previously made preparations for that purpose.

6th. That it appears to this House, that the preference, so given to Boyd and his party, was claimed by them to the foundation of a supposed fact, in the settlement of the preceding loan for the service of the year 1795, between the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the said Boyd and his party; namely, that "the contract was entered into under the condition, that no other public loan for this country should be made, until the period fixed for the last payment of the loan then contracted for should have elapsed;" and on the supposition that the negotiation of a new loan at that time would be injurious to the said Boyd and his party.

7th. That it appears to this House, not only that the said Boyd has not any where contended or affirmed, that the preceding condition was ever expressed in specific terms, or reduced to any form; but that the contrary is implied in the arguments made use of by him in support of his claim, viz. "that it was a right, which was founded in justice, and the nature of things, recognized by constant practice and public opinion."

8th. That it appears to this House, that in the month of October 1795, the said Walter Boyd, Esq. did state to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the right of the contractors to object to the negotiation of a new loan; that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did, on that occasion, say, that he would send for their party, (viz. that of Boyd and Roberts) to hear what they had to say, before any competition should take place, but that he seemed positively determined not to admit of their claim.

9th. That it does not appear to this House, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has any where admitted the reality of such engagement or condition having been made by him with the said Boyd and his party; but, on the contrary, that he did state to the parties assembled at his house on the 25th of November, "that the circumstances had come but recently to his knowledge," and that he did not admit them to be an obligation.

That it appears to this House, that no such condition is, in fact, either expressed or implied in any of the papers laid before this House, in which the particulars of the contract for the said loan appear to have been fully adjusted and settled between the contracting parties.

That it appears to this House, that such a restriction is introduced into the memorandum of the contract for the loan for the service of the present year; and that no precedent is any where alledged for the introduction of a stipulation so new, and of which the consequences may be extremely important.

10th. That it appears to this House, that the said Boyd, in his addresses to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the subject of his supposed right to a preference over the other competitors, supported that right by arguments drawn from his situation as a holder of scrip of the preceding loan, and from the injury which he and the other contractors

to the general practice on former occasions, when sums of considerable magnitude have been raised.

15th. That it appears to this House, that, in the month of September, 1795, the said Walter Boyd did, at the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, undertake to advance money for the use of Government, to the amount of 1,000,000*l.* for which he was to reimburse himself by bills to be drawn upon the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, to be accepted by them, and negotiated at his own convenience; and that bills to the amount of 700,000*l.* were drawn in London, on the Commissioners of the Treasury in the name of Walter Boyd, jun. and bearing a fictitious date, at Hamburgh, several weeks preceding the time, at which, with the privity of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, they were really drawn in London; and that the said Walter Boyd, jun. is a gentleman not engaged in any house of business in Hamburgh. That the said bills, though drawn in London, yet professing to be foreign, and not written on stamped paper, were of such a nature and description as the Bank of England would have refused to discount for any commercial house whatever, and such as it would have been injurious to the credit of any private house to have negotiated.

That it appears to this House, that Walter Boyd, Esq. has declared, that no part of his right to a preference, as a contractor for the new loan, was grounded on the transaction of the bills dated at Hamburgh, and circulated by him for the service of Government: That he never had any expectation of that sort; and that he took no merit at all to himself in having consented to that operation.

16th. That it appears to this House, that the loan so finally and unexpectedly settled on the said twenty-fifth of November, was not submitted to the consideration of this House until the seventh of December; and that the deposit was not required from the contributors until the tenth of December.

That it appears to this House, that the interval of twelve days between the settlement of the terms of the loan and submitting it to the consideration of this House, very greatly exceeds any that has been known on such occasions, and that no advantage is likely to accrue to the Public from an interval of such unprecedented length.

That it appears to this House, that His Majesty's gracious message, containing a communication, that His Majesty would be induced to meet any disposition for negotiation on the part of the enemy, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect, was delivered to this House, on Tuesday the 8th of December, and that, in consequence of the intimation contained in the message, the value of the loan suddenly rose above five per cent. creating, by that operation only, an additional profit on the whole loan of more than nine hundred thousand pounds sterling.

That it appears to this House, that no such declarations, on the part of a contractor, palpably preferred, and immoderately benefited by the gift of a loan of eighteen millions sterling, on such terms, and accompanied with such arrangements as to create a profit of twelve per cent. or 2,160,000*l.* before the first payment became due, can acquit the Chancellor of the Exchequer of having departed from the principle of free and open competition, in favour of Walter Boyd, Esq. in a manner incompatible with the interest of the Public.

That it appears to this House, that, in every part of the transaction

of the late loan, the public interest has been sacrificed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and that the profits to the contractors, at the expence of the nation, have been so exorbitantly swelled, as to have risen even before the deposit was made thereon, to an amount greatly exceeding the deposit itself, viz. on a loan of eighteen millions, to the enormous and incredible sum of two millions, one hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling.

Mr. Chancellor PITT. I understand the gentleman has proposed the alternative to the House, either of proceeding immediately to the discussion, or of allowing time for the Resolutions to be printed, and adjourning their consideration to a future day. As the charge relates entirely to myself, it cannot be supposed that I am even now unprepared. But as the honourable gentleman has brought forward a long string of facts and deductions, involving a charge of the highest misdemeanor against me, in the execution of my public duty, I wish to know minutely both the nature of the charge, and of those particulars upon which it is grounded. It is impossible from one reading to follow the series of such a detail, or be prepared to enter upon the discussion with any degree of fairness. If, therefore, the honourable gentleman is desirous that those whom he accuses should distinctly understand the nature of the charge, or be properly enabled to meet his statement, he will probably consider it as the most proper method to move that the Resolutions be printed, and that the first open day be appointed to take them into consideration.

Mr. W. SMITH said that this was precisely the point which he wished to submit to the discretion of the House. The Resolutions which he had moved, he had so framed as to comprise a history of the whole transaction, and he should think it highly improper and absurd to call upon the House to take them immediately into their consideration. He should therefore now move that the Resolutions be printed.

The SPEAKER suggested, that the most proper mode of proceeding would be, to move the first Resolution, and then to adjourn the debate. As the Resolutions had not been regularly moved, no order of the House could take place with respect to them.

The debate was then adjourned to Friday next, on an understanding that in the interval the Resolutions should be printed.

*Tuesday, February 23d.*

A petition was presented from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of London, against the bill for making Wet Docks.

Alderman ANDERSON said, it would appear to the House,

from the petition, that the corporation of the city of London had it in contemplation to embrace a plan for obtaining the convenience of wet docks, which would be attended with none of the objections to which the other plan was liable, which would not ruin near 2,000 families, and violate an immense quantity of property, and at the same time, on much easier and more advantageous terms, realise every important object which the other had in view. He therefore moved that the petition should lie on the table, which was agreed to, and counsel allowed to be heard in support of the petition, and also in defence of the bill.

Mr. HENNIKER MAJOR, after stating the object of the measure, moved for leave to bring in a bill to allow costs to be given in the discretion of the court, in cases of misdemeanour; and also in the same discretion to allow costs to witnesses and constables, concerned in the apprehension of vagrants.

Mr. WIGLEY said, that the country rates were always much loaded, and this measure would prove a very considerable addition. He wished the subject to be delayed, that gentlemen during a recess might be enabled to inquire into it.

Leave granted,

*Wednesday, February 24th.*

Lord SHEFFIELD moved for leave, in a bill, to extend the line of the Kennet and Avon Canal, on which Sir William Young moved, that the debate arising on the motion should be adjourned to this day three months.

For the adjournment	—	38
Against it	—	14—24

The House then adjourned.

*Thursday, February 25th.*

This day only thirty-four members attending the House at four o'clock, it was of course adjourned till to-morrow.

*Friday, February 26th.*

Mr. DOUGLAS brought up a bill for the regulation of Controverted Elections; which was read a first time.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR observed, that when a bill for general naturalization was formerly proposed in Parliament, it was agreed, that the fees of office, which the officers of that House would lose on individual bills, would entitle them to some compensation. As the general inclosure of the waste lands must totally destroy their fees on private inclosure bills, he conceived that the House could

not object to grant them a proper compensation, should that measure be carried into a law. He would therefore move. "That it be an instruction to the Committee appointed to consider of the state of the waste lands, to inquire into the loss that should be sustained by the officers of the House, provided a bill for the general inclosure of waste lands should pass into a law;" which motion was agreed to.

General MACLEOD rose to address the House on an extraordinary circumstance of horror and barbarity, which made such an impression on his mind, as almost deprived him of the power of utterance. He could not, consistent with his duty, remain silent; the honour of the House, and the credit of the nation were implicated, and he therefore hoped, that what he should allude to would be cleared up to the satisfaction of the public. He held in his hand a paragraph, on the bare perusal of which the blood must freeze, and the mind of every man must shudder with indignation and horror. For the noble Lord alluded to in the article, he had the highest respect; he admired him as a man, and loved him as a fellow soldier. Of all mankind he conceived he would be the last to countenance the horrors contained in the paragraph; and he gave His Majesty's Ministers this opportunity of contradicting a calumny, the contemplation of which must excite general indignation. The paragraph to which he adverted, appeared this day in the Morning Post and Fashionable World. It purported to be an extract of a letter from Jamaica, and after stating other particulars, it contained the following passage, which he would read as part of his speech: "Strange might the idea appear, but 'tis a fact, we have imported from Cuba, one hundred blood hounds, attended by twenty Spanish chasseurs, and they last Friday proceeded into the woods to hunt out and destroy the enemy. It is the opinion of people in general, they will have the desired effect. Query, What effect will it have on Mr. Wilberforce? I suppose he shrinks at the idea of hunting human flesh and blood, as he is pleased to stile them, with blood hounds.—We all wish him present. We had severe duty during Christmas holidays, in keeping guard in and about this town, that being the critical juncture to observe the dispositions of the slaves, but I am happy to say, they are universally well affected, and I never saw a quieter Christmas; there is very little to be dreaded from them. One half of Kingston is in Trelawny; have been there these three months myself; have been in one expedition against the Maroons in Charlestown; they immediately lay down their arms. In addition to a number of fine fellows that have lost their lives, it has cost the country above half a million since the commencement

of this unfortunate war. You would scarcely credit that 500 of these fellows could so long withstand upwards of 5,000 troops, which are the number against them; they get into the interior parts of the mountains, and 'tis impossible to get at them. I suppose you are almost tired of reading; if not, I am almost tired of writing; so will conclude this subject by wishing a speedy extirpation to them."

After reading such a passage, he could not conceive that there was a gentleman in the House whose feelings must not be shocked at the recital of such barbarities. The circumstance must bring to the mind, the shocking atrocities encouraged by the Spaniards in the island of Cuba, in South America. The diversion of the planters there was to hunt down for their sport, the original proprietors of the land. It was recorded by the best historians, that those ferocious animals, after proceeding to the abode of an unfortunate family, first glutted on the blood of the father, and then seized and devoured the child at the breast of the mother! He sincerely trusted, that for similar purposes, the Government of Jamaica had not sent to Cuba for blood hounds and Spanish chasseurs, to exterminate the Maroons, the proprietors of a part of the soil. Parliament, for the credit of the nation, was interested in discovering whether the paragraph he had just read, was founded in fact or not. He did not know the noble Lord (Balcarras) personally, but his family and the honourable General's had long preserved the strictest intimacy, and he hoped that it might never go abroad to the world, that he had imported blood hounds into Jamaica—blood hounds to extinguish those unhappy people mentioned in the paragraph! When gentlemen spoke with so much animation on the barbarities committed in France, they should recollect, that there, man opposed man, but they never had recourse to such shocking barbarities as those alluded to. He had, in the East Indies, witnessed all the horrors and miseries; he had seen the father supporting the wife with one hand, and his children expiring in his embrace with famine, rather than forego the principle of superstition early instilled into their bosoms; but he never witnessed the barbarities described in this horrible paragraph. He wished to be informed from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if there was the least foundation for the intelligence; for if what was stated was true, he felt himself obliged, whatever his respect might be for the noble Lord, to bring him to the bar of the House of Peers, to answer for this most abominable transaction.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that without referring to the manner



in which the honourable Member had introduced the circumstance, or without entering into any eulogium on the character of the noble Lord, which every gentleman who knew him must conceive unnecessary, yet the facts stated were certainly extremely important in their nature. This much he must assert, that nothing could be farther from the idea of His Majesty's Ministers or Government, than to employ those animals as instruments of war in the way which had just been mentioned. For the present, he conceived it unnecessary to say a word more on the business.

General MACLEOD said, he sincerely hoped that the paragraph was totally unfounded; if it were true, it would be the foulest and blackest stain that could happen to the character of the country.

Mr. YORKE animadverted on the atrocities committed by the Maroons, whose object was plunder and extermination. In this country, dogs were kept to hunt and discover the haunts of thieves and murderers. The Maroons inhabited the mountains, from which they descended for prey, and were inaccessible in their habitations; he did not conceive, therefore, if dogs were kept in a civilized country, to discover the haunts of robbers, that it was by any means reprehensible to keep them in Jamaica for similar purposes.

Mr. FOX said, he was far from attributing any blame on this head to His Majesty's Ministers. It never could be the intention of Government to carry on a warfare of this nature; but, for the honour of the country, it was a matter which ought strictly to be investigated. The report had been spread abroad, and he should be happy to hear it contradicted, to shew that such was not the real state of the case.

Mr. JEKYLL said, that early in the session he had introduced the subject of the fictitious bills dated at Hamburgh, and had been answered by the right honourable gentleman, that he would be ready to discuss that subject when regularly brought forward. From the evidence collected in the Report of the Loan Committee, which had now for some time been upon the table, he would be able to support every charge he had made. He wished therefore to appoint an early day, as his professional duties at the circuits would render his absence inevitable. Upon Monday, there was, indeed, a business of great public importance understood to come on; but as no particular inconvenience would arise from the delay of the tax bill, and as the subject he wished to agitate involved a personal charge against the right honourable gentleman, which, if innocent, he would wish to wipe away, he might be disposed to defer the other. If not, he

would at least have the satisfaction to think that he left the matter to be taken up by abilities far superior to his own.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the notice given by the honourable gentleman, was, in many points of view, one of the most extraordinary he had ever heard: in the first place, the honourable gentleman had stated, that he had the business in contemplation, and had even mentioned it in a very early period of the session.— Secondly, he stated what was perfectly correct, that the Report of the Loan Committee had lain a considerable time on the table.— Thirdly, he said, that Monday had been long pre-occupied by a subject of great importance.— Fourthly, he mentioned the necessity of his soon leaving town to attend the circuit, a circumstance which the honourable gentleman must have known on the last day of term: upon all these grounds, the honourable gentleman fixed his motion for Monday, with a view of giving him (Mr. Pitt) the alternative, either of postponing a question of great public importance, or else of letting the honourable gentleman go upon the circuit with the idea, that he (Mr. Pitt) was unwilling to meet the discussion; however, as the debate upon this subject would not, in all probability, extend to any great length, it might take place on Monday without interfering with any other business.

The notice was fixed for Monday.

Mr. SMITH moved, that the order of the day for resuming the adjourned debate on the resolutions relative to the loan be read.

The order of the day was then read.

Mr. SMITH corrected some of the figures which were improperly stated in the printed Report.

Mr. JEKYLL gave notice that he should, on Monday next, submit a motion to the consideration of the House, on the subject of the Hamburg bills.

The House then (according to order) resumed the adjourned debate on the motion made upon last Monday, “ viz. That it appears to this House, that the principle of making loans for the public service, by free and open competition, uniformly professed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been very generally recognised, as affording the fairest prospect of public advantage.”

The question on the first resolution being put,

The right honourable SYLVESTER DOUGLAS hoped he had no occasion to make any apology for rising to express his sentiments on the present motion, as he had the honour to be named on the Select Committee, and had considered it as his duty to attend it regularly, and to spare no pains in the diligent investigation of the subject concerning which the House had thought fit to direct an inquiry. At the close

of that inquiry, it was a great satisfaction to him to find that there was an unanimous concurrence of opinion between himself and all his colleagues of the Committee who had thought proper to be present on that day, on the only matter on which they had felt themselves entitled or bound to express an opinion; a matter, which, from the course of the debates which terminated in the appointment of the Committee, appeared to him, and he believed to many others, to form one of the most important objects of the inquiry. That opinion was expressed in the introductory part of the Report to the following effect, *viz.* "*That on inspection of the lists, as well as on the examination of the parties, the Committee saw no ground to suppose that any interference took place on the part of any persons connected with Government in the distribution of any part of the loan.*"

He must also do the honourable gentleman who was Chairman of the Committee, (and had submitted that forty-fold system of resolutions to the House, of which the subject of the present motion formed the first) the justice to say, that he had been uniform in professing a sincere belief that nothing of undue, corrupt, or culpable motives had operated on the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the transaction of the loan, and that the highest degree of blame he had ever thought imputable to him was that of *improvidence*.

This has been his constant profession in the House before the Committee was named, in the progress of the Committee, and in his speech the other night on opening his resolutions. But when I compared that declared opinion of the honourable Member with the tenor of his speech, and the language and spirit of the resolutions, I felt a degree of surprise which has not been much diminished by the interval of time that has elapsed since the adjournment of the debate. The honourable gentleman professed that he had not the slightest suspicion that the loan had been employed by Government as the instrument of corruption; yet in his very outset the other night, he thought fit to remark, what he was pleased to call, a most extraordinary *coincidence*, between the names of the gentlemen in the list of subscribers to the loan delivered to the Bank, and of those who attended the meeting of Merchants, Bankers, and Traders of the City of London, held at Grocers' Hall, where the measure of the two bills for the safety of His Majesty's person, and against seditious meetings, was approved of. A Minister, he said, would not in these days, be so weak or clumsy as to attempt the direct bribery of Members of this House, by the distribution among them of paltry portions of *scrip*, but that it might be a stroke of refined and effectual corruption, to purchase the sanction of the great monied interest of the metropolis to his measures, especially during a war,

by large allotments of the profit of a bargain, profuse in regard to the state in proportion as it was advantageous to them. But this, it seems, was only a singular coincidence, and he acquitted the merchants also of corruption, by declaring, that he thought them men of characters too respectable and independant, to be biased by any pecuniary advantages, in the sentiments they might declare on subjects affecting the interests and safety of the Public. Did the honourable gentleman really expect that the House would suppose him idle and absurd enough to occupy their time with stating these things, merely to point out a *curious* and accidental coincidence of circumstances totally unconnected and independant; or would it be doing justice to his understanding, not to conclude, whatever colour he might use, that he meant to imply that the loan was the cause, and the vote at Grocer's Hall the effect? Neither were his resolutions, and especially the two last, less inconsistent with his uniform professions concerning the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He tells us, that he never thought, and does not think, that any thing beyond the mere peccadillo of *improvidence* is imputable to that right honourable gentleman, and he concludes the resolutions which he desires the House to adopt, by pronouncing, that the public agent, the depository of the national faith and honour, the trustee and guardian of its financial concerns, "had, in every part of the transaction of  
 " the late loan, sacrificed the public interest, in favour of a con-  
 " tractor palpably preferred, and immoderately benefited, by the  
 " gift of a loan of 18,000,000*l.* on such terms, and accompanied  
 " with such arrangements, as to create a profit of 2,160,000*l.*" What a mockery must it appear to this House, to find such a proposition prefaced by such professions, and how vain must be the honourable gentleman's hope, if he thinks he can, in such a manner, *lenitate verbi rei acerbitatem mitigare*.

Sir, although only the first resolution is before the House on the present motion, yet, as they have all been opened, stated, and printed, and form one chain of assertion, argument, or insinuation, leading (by what sort of logic will appear in the course of what I have to submit) to the conclusions in the two last, I hope I may take the liberty to answer them all together, and I shall begin by declaring, that I think every one of the honourable gentleman's 39 articles, [this being supposed to allude to Mr. *Smith's* religious persuasion as a Dissenter, produced a general laugh], which were framed for the sake of establishing the 40th, is either founded in misapprehension, suppression, partial statement, or perversion of the evidence contained in the Report, and mixed up with so much false argument, unfounded insinuation, and misapplication of prin-

ciples, and, above all, so obviously offered to the House as the groundwork of a most unjust, and therefore, under the circumstances, a most dangerous accusation of one of its members, that I find it my duty to object to all of them—and to state, beforehand, that before I sit down, I shall move such an amendment on the first, as I think necessarily called for, in order at once to assert the principle contained in it, as now worded, and to vindicate the Chancellor of the Exchequer's departure from that principle, as far as he has found himself compelled to depart from it in the present instance; and, if the House shall concur in this amendment, I shall propose to them to dispose of the 37 next resolutions, should the honourable gentleman persist in moving them, by the previous question, and of the 2 last by a direct negative, in order to substitute, in their room, two others, expressive of that justification and approbation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's conduct, which the unwarranted attack upon it has, in my mind, rendered necessary, both for his sake, and that of the Public. The general heads on which the contract for the loan has been arraigned are, I think, as follows:

That the Chancellor of the Exchequer has, by concluding with Messrs. Boyd and Co., done a manifest and voluntary injury to other respectable individuals; to Mr. Morgan and his friends, who have complained, and to Messrs. Mellish, who have not complained.

That this injury has arisen by his departing unnecessarily from his own favourite principle of competition.

That he affected to yield to groundless and idle claims of preference by Messrs. Boyd.

That, in truth, he gave that preference as the reward for a great service rendered to him, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, by a large advance of money, under circumstances extremely censurable.

That the terms of the loan were, in themselves, grossly advantageous to the contractor, and injurious to the Public, and were entered into at a time when there were other persons ready (and this, it is said, can be proved) to have taken it at a much smaller profit.

That the Chancellor of the Exchequer contrived to sink the value of the 3 per cent. funds, by an unusual operation of the Commissioners for the reduction of the national debt, and then gave nothing but three per cents for the loan, (except 6s. 6d. long annuity;) which was, in truth, a scheme to enhance the value of the loan to the contractor, at the expence of the Public.

That he postponed the delivery of the King's message con-

cerning peace till after the bargain was concluded, and thereby occasioned an enormous advance in the funds, "*which it was impossible not to foresee*"—an advance whereof the Public must have had the benefit, if the message had been delivered on an earlier, or the bargain concluded on a later day, and at a time nearer to that on which the budget was opened, agreeably to general practice.

From all these heads of charge, the honourable Member infers, what his speeches call *improvidence*, and his resolutions translate a *sacrifice of the public interest*, in order to benefit a favoured contractor and his friends, to the amount of 2,160,000*l.* out of the public pocket, and what other gentlemen have stated as such palpable corruption as must clearly appear, if the lists of the contractors, and the subordinate lists of the sharers in the loan, should be produced. The honourable Chairman, indeed, has always declared, that, in his view of the subject, the production of the lists was unnecessary and useless; but other Members, as eager for the inquiry as himself, have expressed themselves very differently, and have rendered, as far as it could be obtained, such production absolutely necessary, either for the exculpation, or detection, of the persons charged as the agents in the corrupt distribution, and who, it was hinted, on the day when the Committee was moved for, might be found by looking round the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this House.

I proceed to consider, first, the supposed injury done to Mr. Morgan. That gentleman had been treated in all the previous debates as the principal *dramatis persona*. His evidence was first called for in the Committee; and occupied much more of our time than any of the other examinations. The honourable Chairman, however, abstained so long in his late speech from mentioning Mr. Morgan, that I had begun to apprehend that he meant to omit him altogether. That he did not do—He at last took notice of him. I shall take the liberty of restoring him to his place in the front of the battle, and shall consider his case, both on his own evidence, and on that of the other gentlemen who have been examined.

The *gravamen* of which he complains is, that, on the faith, not only of the general knowledge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's adoption of the principle of competition, but also in consequence of direct communications from him, through the Governor of the Bank, by which he declared his intention that there should be an open competition in the present instance, he (Mr. Morgan) had determined to become a bidder, had opened a list, and had induced a number of persons, to the amount of about 400, either to advance large sums of money to him, or to keep their cash unemployed at their bankers, in order to be prepared to make the usual deposit, in case he

should be the successful competitor ; that this had been the affair of several weeks preparation ; and that afterwards, and not till the 25th of November, the day when the different competitors, consisting of three parties, himself, Messrs. Mellish, and Mr. Boyd's party, went by appointment to Downing Street, to hear the usual preliminaries stated, he learned that the rule of competition was to be abandoned, and a preference given to Mr. Boyd ; that this measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had occasioned a great injury to him and his subscribers, as they had not made any provision for the re-investment of the money which they had necessarily called in to make the usual deposit, and such payments as might be fixed for an early period.

Such is Mr. Morgan's complaint, and that of a number of his subscribers, as set forth in their petition presented to this House on the 4th of *December*. And, I must here observe, previous to the comparison of the complaint with the evidence in the Report, that, if the case had been as stated, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, from sound reasons of public advantage, departed from a positive engagement with individuals, the consequence would have been only, that they would have been entitled to have received a compensation from the Public, adequate to the injury they could have shewn themselves to have sustained. The most positive engagement cannot be more inviolable than the right to the exclusive enjoyment of private property ; yet it is often both wise and just in the Legislature, to possess itself of such property, when the public good requires it, without the consent of the owner ; compensation, in such case, being all that he can fairly claim or expect. The prayer, therefore, of the petition of Mr. Morgan's subscribers, that the bargain with Mr. Boyd should not be sanctioned, because of the injury they supposed themselves to have sustained, was absurd.

But what is Mr. Morgan's evidence on this subject ?—I will read it from the Report. “ On Friday, the 23d of October, I understood from a conversation with Mr. *Godschal Johnson*” (one of the contractors, with Mr. Morgan, for the loan for the service of the year 1794) “ that it was his opinion that Mr. Boyd would have the loan. In consequence of this, I told him I had no intention of forming a list, nor had made any kind of arrangement.” After this he states himself to have fluctuated in his intention, and in his conjectures, concerning the preference that might be given to Boyd. On Monday, the 26th of that month, he saw the Governor of the Bank, and also on Tuesday the 27th, and Wednesday the 28th. On each of those days, he stated, on the one hand, the general rumour concerning Boyd, and on the other, the fact, that Messrs.

Mellish were forming a list, which seemed to contradict the idea of a preference to Boyd, and also that he himself had been much applied to to open a list. The Governor of the Bank, he says, told him, on all these three days, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had always said "*competition*," whenever he had spoken to him on the subject; but that still he (the Governor) had great doubts on his mind—"there was a something, he did not explain that something, "that Mr. Boyd and his party seemed to be confident." On the 27th, he told the Governor of the Bank he should make up his mind positively by the next day. On the next day, the Governor, after repeating that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had always said "*competition*," expressed, in a very strong manner, his doubts—and that the loan would go to Mr. Boyd, and he (Mr. Morgan) would be disappointed. "There was something or another—he never mentioned what, "that would be brought forward to prevent its going to a competition." This is taken from the narrative which he at first stated to the Committee, and which was afterwards deliberately read over to him, that he might correct any mistakes he or the clerk, in taking it down, might have fallen into. On the question, however, whether, on that very 28th of October, the Governor alluded to any other motive as operating with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, exclusive of the last payment on the preceding loan not having been completed, (a circumstance on which I shall have afterwards to observe), he answers, "beyond all doubt whatever, and that was no "part of it; particularly it was stated by the Governor of the Bank "to me, that there had been an important money negotiation, "amounting to 900,000*l.* in which it was understood that Mr. "Boyd had greatly assisted the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and "that on that ground Mr. Boyd would have the loan. This was "stated not once, but repeatedly." Here, Sir, the House will perceive a strange contrariety between Mr. Morgan's narrative and his answers, on which I wish to make no harsher remark, than that he appears to be of so feeble and incoherent a memory, that little reliance can be had on his testimony, in the investigation of the facts in question. But let us see the opinion he ultimately formed on the subject of the supposed exclusive preference, and the resolution he came to with regard to his own list. "I had private intimations, "confidential ones, that *I could rely on*, that Mr. Boyd's party were "constantly *assured* of having the loan. (He afterwards explained, "that he meant by "*assured*" that they were *confident*.) The result of the several conversations with the Governor of the Bank "was an impression on my mind, that *certainly and positively* "there would be no competition. From Monday, the 26th of



“ October, when I first had the communication with the Governor of the Bank, until Monday, the 23d of November, *I never had an abatement* of that impression.” Here is therefore a positive conviction, that no competition was to be expected, and, of course, that all preparation by Mr. Morgan would be idleness and folly. How extraordinary must his conduct appear after this, when he tells us, that he determined, on the 28th of October—not to relinquish all idea of becoming a bidder—no—to make a list, which he opened publicly on the 29th. This is Mr. Morgan’s own history of his own opinion, and of his own conduct; and, if it is to be credited, what injury has been done to him? If we are to credit his recollection, in opposition to that of the Governor of the Bank, he was warned by that gentleman “ *that he would be tricked,*” to which, he says, he replied, “ that he should do his utmost to be well prepared for competition, and, if he was precluded, it should not be his fault.” With a clear persuasion that it was determined to preclude him, what possible motives can we assign for his preparation, or what effect could he possibly expect from it, except a pretext for clamour and complaint against Government and a petition for redress to the House of Commons? But if *he* was not, were his subscribers injured? If he did not communicate to them his conviction, or the grounds of it, and they were not otherwise apprized of them, they were. But by whom? Not by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—he had no communication with them—Most assuredly by their principal, Mr. Morgan. He inscribed their names in his list, encouraged their preparations, received 5 per cent on the supposed amount of the loan from some of them—“ and yet there were undoubtedly abundance of them, to whom he made no communication of the impression on his mind, that there would be no competition. “ To some,” says he, “ it is very likely I did communicate it, but in general, I observed as a rule, to say but little to any body, but to hear all from every body.” That he did not communicate his impression to his principal subscribers, or even betray to them any thing like a doubt of intended competition, is confirmed by the remarkable testimony of the Governor of the Bank on this part of the case; who tells us, he was more on Morgan’s, than on either of the other lists. We collect from him, that as he had never declared any opinion of his to Mr. Morgan, purporting that Mr. Boyd would have the preference on account of the money negotiation, so Mr. Morgan, not only never expressed to him that such was his own opinion, but so treated the subject of the loan in their conversations upon it, that he (the Governor) thought, to the last, that Mr. Morgan never suspected that

Mr. Boyd would have a preference at all. "I believe," says he, "he *always* thought it would be by competition."

Let us now, on the other hand, suppose, that the belief, of no competition and of preference to Mr. Boyd, was as strongly impressed on the minds of Mr. Morgan's subscribers as on his own. This, he, in different parts of his examination, strongly insinuates. "I did hear generally from all persons, that that idea was understood." In that case they are as little injured as himself; and have nobody but themselves to blame, if, from want of reflection, or other causes, they really acted as if that had been to happen, the contrary of which they believed to have been determined upon. But, in truth, I must be permitted to say, that I cannot believe Mr. Morgan's account of his own conduct on this subject. I would ask if the House can believe him? [Here a loud cry of "Hear, hear," from the opposite side.] I repeat it,—can the House believe him?—I have avoided and shall avoid all strong expressions, and all imputations of intentional mis-statement by Mr. Morgan. I will ascribe every thing, if you please, to a frail and unfaithful memory. But can we believe an account so much at variance with itself; with the actions of the person who gives it; with the testimony of others referred to and concerned; and with the general circumstances and complexion of the whole transaction?—One observation more on this part of the subject. Mr. Morgan's positive belief of predetermined preference was founded on private intimations—confidential ones,—on which he could rely. On confidential information, which he had constantly received, up to Tuesday, the 29th of November. It will appear to have been very fit, when the rest of his testimony is considered, for the Committee to endeavour to ascertain, if possible, the degree of authority and authenticity which it was natural for Mr. Morgan to attribute to these confidential communications. This was one means of judging of the force of his judgement, and his rules of argument and conduct, which it was of some consequence to know, as he was examined by several Members of the Committee, as to matters of opinion, on many points of great public concern. It was also material to discover how far the Chancellor of the Exchequer could really be shewn to have given reasonable grounds to found a belief, that he had a predetermined intention to give a preference to Boyd, contrary to his declarations repeatedly made in this House, and to what he had publicly authorised the Governor of the Bank to declare, the first time he ever gave him any authority on the subject. There is something in this part of Mr. Morgan's examination, which has almost the air of a comedy. He declined naming the person from whom he had di-

rectly received the intimations in question, without his leave ; because it probably might lead to some other person of whom he knew nothing ; and he afterwards informed us that he had consulted him, and had not obtained his leave.

This confidential information, he had said, was always from one and the same person.

Q. " Will you mention whether there were any circumstances in that person's situation, that induced you to think the information more authentic than the general rumour you have mentioned ?

A. " No circumstances.

Q. " What were your reasons for thinking you could particularly rely on the information you had received from that person ?

A. " Because I know him to be a *true, honest man*, fully to be confided in.

Q. " Had you any reason to think that he had any particular authentic means of information ?

A. " From his telling me he had that information, and that I might rely on it.

Q. " Did he say he had the information from Mr. Boyd, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or from any other particular person or persons whom he mentioned ?

A. " He never mentioned the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor Mr. Boyd. He certainly mentioned a person in the City, from whom he had the information. That person I do not know personally.

Q. " When you were informed that the person with whom you are *not* acquainted, had declared that Mr. Boyd was to have the loan, did you know of any circumstances belonging to *that* person, which led you to think that he had the means of authentic information on the subject ?

A. " I did believe so, from his acquaintance with some of Mr. Boyd's party.

Q. " When the information was given you, was it mentioned to you on what ground that person, whom you did *not* know, had formed his opinion that Mr. Boyd was to have the loan ?

A. " *Because he was told so* ;—That was mentioned to me.

Q. " Was it said by whom he was told so ?

A. " I do not know that ever he communicated that to my friend that spoke to me,—I do not recollect ever hearing it.

Q. " Then you never heard from whom by name that person, whom you do *not* know, had his information on the subject ?

A. " I never heard that he had ever said any name.

Q. " As you said you had heard that Messrs. Boyd were constantly

“assured of having the loan, were any persons named from whom they had that assurance?”

A. “I always understood that they felt themselves confident of having it. And so I constantly had the *confidential information*. And it agreed with *public rumour*.” When I said, Messrs. Boyd “were assured—I meant they were confident.”

I beg pardon for having read so long a passage of the Report. It appears from thence, that the confidential information, which in Mr. Morgan's conception, amounted, one would think, to a positive demonstration, was indeed given him by a *true honest man*; but derived no support whatever from that honest man's veracity, because he stated it merely on the faith of another unknown, personally, to Mr. Morgan; and that other unknown person informed the honest man, who was known to Mr. Morgan, that he believed it, *because he was told so*. By whom he was told so, what that informant's sources of knowledge were, or what was his measure of sense or veracity, neither Mr. Morgan, nor, as far as appears, Mr. Morgan's friend, possessed any means of knowing or guessing; and, at last, this valuable intelligence, on which such positive reliance was placed, resolves itself into nothing but the hearsay of a hearsay of a hearsay, which, after all, Mr. Morgan feels the necessity of confirming, by the corroboration of *mere rumour*.

Is it not, therefore, much more natural, and, on the whole, more just to Mr. Morgan, that we should believe, as the Governor of the Bank does, that he acted on the persuasion of an open competition; and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave nobody reason to think otherwise, than that he really intended that open competition, till the 25th of November, when he came to have the claims of Mr. Boyd fully stated, and urged upon him, and to hear the Governor of the Bank's recollection of what had passed on the treaty for the former loan? On this supposition, Mr. Morgan and his friends having prepared their money on the chance of a competition, in which they might have been out-bid, have suffered no more inconvenience than they must have done, if, on an open competition, they had been out-bid. That they lost the chance of being the best bidders, because they rejected the qualified competition, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself under the necessity of proposing, in such a case;—where they acted merely on a declared general predilection of that right honourable gentleman; for he had authorised no official communication of that sort, by the Governor of the Bank, till the 23d of November, and after all the preparations by Mr. Morgan and his friends had been made;—will hardly be thought to entitle them to indemnity. If it

did, (and the establishment of so strange a precedent could be justified) the justice of Parliament would give such indemnity ; but we must lay out of the consideration of the present debate, all pretext of wilful injury to those individuals ; and all argument drawn from thence, of undue motives, in the transaction and terms of this loan.

I will now, with the leave of the House, proceed to examine the circumstances and nature of Mr. Boyd's claims, as they appear from the Report.

In the month of October, Mr. Boyd, who, with his party, (as it is called) had contracted for the loan of the former year, says, he first heard, that a new loan for the service of this year, was in contemplation ; and that, about that time, he stated to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right which he thought belonged to the *contractors*, (not the *subscribers*,) to object to the negotiation of the new loan. But he adds, that he did not state it, *by any means, so fully*, as in the conversation on the 24th of November ; and in the joint letter from himself and Mr. Robarts, of that date. Even in that conversation of the 24th of November, Mr. Boyd does not seem to have rested on any strong ground or recollection of *positive* engagement ; for, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer mentioned that he did not recollect any such engagement, Mr. Boyd appears to have answered, that he understood the engagement to have been *either positive or implied*. We may therefore presume, that, in what passed between them, he chiefly founded himself on the arguments which he thought arose out of the nature of the thing ; and on that occasion he tells us, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed *positively determined not to admit of the claim*. From thence, till the 23d of November, he thinks he may positively affirm, that he had no farther communication with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject.

This account corresponds both with that which has repeatedly been given in this House, and with the testimony of the Governor of the Bank, as well as with the whole conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For it is clear, that he acted up till the 24th of November, as he could not have done, upon any intelligible and explicable principle, if he had not really intended an open competition. It is clear he had no recollection of any thing which could bear the construction of an *actual* engagement to Boyd's party ; and that, from the manner in which their *argumentative* claim had been cursorily urged to him, he did not think himself obliged, and did not mean, to act upon it. Is it possible, if the case were otherwise, that, on the 23d of November, he would have commissioned the Governor of the Bank to tell the three parties, that an open com-

petition was intended? What possible advantage could he have expected from such a declaration, if it had not been sincere?

In October, however, he had thought it due to Mr. Boyd's party, to tell them, that he would send to them before any competition should take place, to hear what they had to say. With the impression he had of the inadmissibility of their claim, amidst the great variety of important occupations, in which, during the interval, he was necessarily engaged, would it be extraordinary to find, that he did not fully recollect, or at least, not fulfil this promise, till he was reminded of it by Mr. Boyd's letter of the 23d of the next month? Could he possibly have foreseen the trouble and inconvenience which have arisen to himself and this House, from his not having taken an earlier opportunity of discussing their pretensions, undoubtedly, it is to be supposed, he would have sent to them sooner. But what difference that could have made to the public, or in the terms on which the loan was negotiated, it is impossible to discover.

If he had taken that course, and had referred to the Governor of the Bank, who had been present at the bargain for the preceding year, it appears, by the testimony of that gentleman, when he did refer to him, that he would have been reminded of a circumstance, which does seem to have amounted in his (the Governor's) opinion, to something very like a direct engagement. For, in the conference between the Governor, the Deputy Governor, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 25th of November—previous to that which the third of the proposed resolutions chooses to call a *separate* conference of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with Messrs Boyd and his party, when, in truth, it was a conference at which were also present the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank, besides the two Secretaries to the Treasury,—the Chancellor of the Exchequer having asked the Governor, if he recollected, whether, at the meeting for the preceding loan, he had committed himself to any promise, conformable to Mr. Boyd's claim, the answer was, "He thought Mr. Pitt had in some measure committed himself to such a promise, for that, on adjusting the days of payment for the then loan, one of the contracting parties had wished to have the last payment in February 1796, instead of January, but was answered, by Mr. Pitt, that he could not assent to that, as he might possibly want to raise a new loan in January." Thus it seems manifest, that the Governor of the Bank had a clearer recollection of what had passed on that former occasion, than the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or even Mr. Boyd himself. Accordingly, he tells us, that he always did suppose or suspect that Mr. Boyd would, or might, have

a preference, and that he had said in private confidential conversation, (which, he says, he apprehends, with deference, no gentleman could deem himself justified in divulging,) that he had such suspicions. But, he declares, that he never in his life, to his knowledge or recollection, told Mr. Morgan that he *thought he would be tricked*, nor used words to that effect; if ever he did use such a word, "it certainly was in a joking way." "The grounds of my suspicions were, says he, that I conceived Mr. Boyd's party, in point of good faith, had a claim to some preference, *from the conditions stipulated at the making of the preceding loan* having been departed from; and I thought them too sagacious to omit availing themselves of that circumstance." He did not, however, mention that reason to Morgan, he thinks, not to any body; and he does not recollect that he stated any other reason to him. "*I had no other reason.*" I certainly did not state to him, that there had been a money transaction, in the course of the summer, to the amount of 900,000l., in which Messrs. Boyd had accommodated Government." The House will no doubt, compare this account, with that of Mr. Morgan, who tells us, that the Governor mentioned to him, both the one circumstance and the other, and that he treated the money negotiation as the ground of the preference, and the other matter, "neither as a pledge or contract on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor as of any weight to give Mr. Boyd a claim of preference."

But it is said, that Mr. Boyd's claim, when it did come fully before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was neither bottomed in positive nor implied engagement, nor in the reason of the thing; that Mr. Boyd's arguments drawn from the situation of the contractors, and from practice and public opinion, were frivolous and unsustainable; that he has shifted his grounds on the subject, and is refuted by the testimony of others delivered in the Committee.

As to the fact, we have it from the direct evidence of the Governor of the Bank; and what he tells us concerning the conversation on the occasion of the former loan, proves two things: first, that he considered what passed as amounting to a promise of which Mr. Boyd would be entitled to avail himself: secondly, that, at the time, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a person of great practice and experience in such matters, did, when the subject was fully present to his mind, feel the incompatibility of an open competition for one loan, to commence before the winding up of the former, with the purchased rights of the contractors for the former. In my view of the matter, this is no immaterial circumstance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer could, at that time, have no bias on

his mind, as to this point ; and yet, he immediately felt that if a second loan began to be paid before the ultimate payment on the first, it would be an injury to the rights of the former contractors. We have then the ideas of the Governor of the Bank, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on this point ; this seems a pretty strong justification of Mr. Boyd's assertion, as to general opinion ; and you will find throughout the Governor of the Bank's examination, that he always continued strongly impressed with the same sentiment. Being asked, whether do you think, in the particular state of the loan of 1795, (i. e. at the time of the bargain for the present loan) that a competition for the late loan would have been unfair, and an act of injustice to Mr. Boyd and his party ? His answer is, " I think they would have had great reason to complain." The same opinion, I contend, is fairly to be collected from Mr. Mellish's evidence ; for he also seems to think, that such a promise as the Governor of the Bank conceives to have been involved in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's declaration on the occasion of the former loan, would have entitled Mr. Boyd to claim a preference. As to the difference between the right of a contractor, merely as such, and of a subscriber, merely as such ; that question will occur by and bye. But it is said, that Mr. Boyd has pretended to set up a *custom* on this subject, and that he not only could not produce a single instance in support of such a custom, but that the only known instance is against it. Mr. Boyd *does not* use the word "*custom*," which gentlemen seem disposed to substitute (and in its strict legal sense) for *practice*, which is the word he *does* use ; and his assertion (in the letter of November 24,) is not that there has been a constant practice, when a new loan is brought forward before the conclusion of the former, to give a preference to the former contractors ; but that he and his party, as the former contractors, had a right, from constant practice, to say, " There must be no new loan (i. e. unless our interests are protected) until the period assigned us for the sale of our *scrip* shall expire", viz. the 15th January—i. e. till the termination of the payments on our last year's loan. Now the constant practice turns out to be exactly conformable to this assertion. Mr. Morgan, indeed, in his narrative, states " that he had understood, it had been set forth, as a matter of *custom* and practice, that the *subscribers* to a loan are entitled to a preference in any loan that may be brought forward before the payments are completed on their former loan ; and that he means positively to declare, as a man of experience, that no such custom or practice has ever existed, or was ever before thought of." It is hardly worth while to remark, that Mr. Morgan's experience cannot be



considered as of great weight on this subject, because he never appears to have been concerned as a contractor in any loan but one, viz. that for the service of the year 1794. But here, Mr. Morgan confounds the *inference* drawn from the alledged (and indisputable) practice, with the practice itself.—No such practice is alledged as that which he denies. It is not alledged, that there is a practice or custom, to give a preference in the case in question. The allegation is, that, by constant practice, the case in question has always been avoided, or at least has never occurred; and it is argued, that it has been avoided because it would injure the right of former contractors, and that, therefore, if it were to be proposed, they would be entitled to object, or to claim such a preference as would indemnify them. But Mr. Morgan has a curious method of disproving the existence of the practice contended for. He says, that when he and his friends contracted for the loan for 1794, a material question put by him to the Chancellor of Exchequer, was, “If any other money was to be borrowed or raised in the course of the year?” He then adds, “If there had been a custom or practice existing, such as before alluded to, I should not have thought it necessary to put such a question.”—Therefore, *that* cannot exist as a right arising out of the nature of the transaction, which a particular individual, not aware of the established maxim that *expressio eorum quæ tacite insunt nihil operatur*, thinks it prudent, from superabundant caution, to make the subject of positive inquiry and stipulation. The only fair inference, from Mr. Morgan’s conduct in this respect, is, that he felt then what Mr. Boyd has since insisted upon, that a new loan, before the expiration of his, would injure a right which he had purchased by his contract.

As to the practice, the evidence of the Governor of the Bank is decisive. He expressly told us, that Mr. Newland had searched in the books of the Bank, and could find no instance whatever, since its establishment, when a new loan was made, and the receipts came out, before all the payments were made on the former. In like manner, Mr. Newland himself (the principal cashier of the Bank) says, “It is understood, that an old loan shall be finished, before a new one takes place, and therefore, if the first payment on the new one were to precede the last on the former, the contractors for the former would have just cause to complain.” The records of this House would prove the same thing.

But Mr. Morgan, says, that the case of his loan was an instance; for that, in that case, *the contract* for the loan of the year 1795 was brought forward before the last payment on his loan was made, that contract being made in December 1794, and his last payment

not till January 1795 ; and that he and his party did not entertain a thought of claiming any preference, although strongly solicited to be competitors for the new loan. Here two answers occur. In the first place, is the principle false, as applied by Mr. Boyd this year, because Mr. Morgan, under the circumstances of his case at the end of the year 1794, either did not see the application of it, or did not choose to avail himself of it? In the second place, the cases are not parallel. In the case in 1794, the contract *was* made, but the deposit or first payment *was not* to be made, and could not be made, till after the last payment of Morgan's loan was over ; because Parliament was not to meet time enough for the possibility of its sanction being given to the bargain, till after the last payment on the former loan. One would have thought the difference in the effect of the two cases, would have appeared so obvious as to be admitted. The future addition of a new stock, to the existing total in the market, can never operate so much in depressing the price of the existing funds, and of the floating scrip of a prior loan, as the actual introduction of the scrip of a new loan, the first payment or deposit on which will be made in a great measure by the sale of the old stock and scrip, and will of course glut the market with that old stock. The honourable chairman and mover quarrels very much with those who call the first payment on a loan, the *first payment*. He says it ought to be called, not a payment but a deposit ; and that the payment which follows the deposit, ought to be called the first payment. It is difficult to see the advantage or purpose of such a verbal criticism, which seems to militate against the use of plain common words, in their plain obvious sense.) On this point, what is the evidence : The Governor of the Bank says, “ that *the bargain* for a new loan, before the last payment of the former, would *certainly not* operate so strongly in affecting the value of the funds, as if *the first payment* (or deposit) on such new loan, were to precede the last payment on the other ; although no doubt, the manner in which they would be affected, would depend, *in a degree*, on the sum remaining unpaid on the old loan.” Mr. Boyd's express testimony is to the same effect ; though he admits, that even a contract for the new loan, made previous to the last payment on the former, would operate more in depreciation of the stocks, than a mere general knowledge or belief, that a new loan would be necessary.

But it has been found out, by the framer of these resolutions, for it never seemed to have occurred in the Committee, that Mr. Boyd when he stated his claims, and made his objections, in the letter of the 24th of November, never thought of any distinction between the case of Morgan's loan, and his own, in this respect ;—

between the antecedency of the *negociation*, and that of the *deposit* on a new loan, to the winding up of a former one ; and the 13th resolution is made to assert this in positive terms. This the right honourable gentleman, in his speech, deduced from the literal expression of the letter of the 24th Nov. where Messrs. Boyd and Roberts say, " we conceive we have an undoubted right to the *negociation* of the loan," &c. But it is most evident from the rest of that letter, that by "*negociation*," in that passage, they mean, *commencement of the payments*, (which is the circumstance which completes the negotiation or bargain on the part of the contractors.) The letter goes on to say, " They must inevitably suffer by the introduction of eighteen millions more *into the market* ;" clearly meaning " by the first payment," since the loan cannot with propriety be said to be in the market, till, by the deposit being made, it is converted into *scrip*, and becomes the object of regular sale. What follows puts this beyond all doubt. " The injury which must result from the introduction of *so large a sum of scrip* (it could never be called scrip till the deposit,) into the market before our exclusive loan expires."

The 14th Resolution asserts, that the *negociation* affects the funds in a far greater degree than the *deposit*. The evidence of the Governor of the Bank, as already stated, asserts most directly the reverse. But it is contended, that Mr. Boyd and his party, as contractors, had no interest nor claim of preference, supposing the principle of his claim right, except in as far as they continued to be holders of the *scrip* of their former loan ; and that the actual scrip-holders, as such, at the time of the new bargain, were alone entitled to avail themselves of the claim ; that the letter of the 24th of November, admitted this, by stating that " several of the contractors being *holders of the scrip*, must inevitably suffer." But the scrip-holders did not complain ; they did not advance any claim ; nor did Mr. Boyd consult them on the subject. Mr. Boyd explained, very fully, to the Committee, his ideas of the distinction between the original contractors with Government on the one hand ; and the subscribers in their lists, the subscribers under those, and the actual scrip-holders, on the other. The risk of the contractors he stated as much greater than that of the mere subscribers. The latter can, at most, only hazard their deposit. The contractors are bound, jointly and severally, to the full extent of the whole bargain, *singuli in solidum*, and must make good all the payments to the last shilling of their fortunes. But it is argued, that, as they part with their shares to subscribers, who pay in the 10 per cent. deposit immediately, they run no risk that can be worth consideration, since the subscribers will always have an interest to complete the other pay-

ments, though at a loss, provided that loss is less than 10 per cent., which they must forfeit by a failure; and the Governor of the Bank, on this part of the case, has declared it as his opinion, that the risk of the scrip losing 10 per cent. "is in truth no risk at all, not worth mentioning—merely possible." It was a comfortable thing to hear this sentiment, from a person in his situation. I believe it is just. Yet, sanguine as one would wish to be on the subject of the national credit, who will say, that there might not be many disasters that would sink our funds, at once below 10 per cent. In other countries, examples of much greater falls have been very common. But this is not the proper view of the risk of the contractors. It is known to be the practice, founded on the dictates of interest and good sense, for the original purchasers of a loan, not to part with their scrip but by degrees, in order to keep up its market price; and, on all the scrip on which they themselves have made the deposit, every fraction which the loan sinks under par, is so much lost to them. Mr. Morgan has known a loan fall 6 per cent. I believe in that of the year 1778, many of the contractors with Government were great losers. In the year 1795, the contractors run peculiar hazard; they remained in a state of responsibility, during a period of great alarm, when Holland was over-run by the French, and the *omnium* actually fell to par, and even to a quarter per cent. discount. It is true, both the Governor of the Bank, and the Cashier, seem to think, that contractors can have no peculiar claim, different from that of mere subscribers or scrip-holders. But Mr. Newland adds, that he apprehends the contractors must fulfil their engagements, though the subscribers should fail in theirs; and Mr. Mellish, says, "He should suppose Government looks to the contractors only,—that they are answerable for the whole, and the subscribers only are answerable to them, as a secondary transaction." Indeed, to whom else can Government look?—They see nobody else,—they know not who the subscribers are—and they rely solely on the ability of the contractors for the supply of the money. In the view of Government, they are the only subscribers, the only scrip-holders, the only *contributors*; which, according to the honourable chairman, is the true, right, parliamentary word; contractor, subscriber, and scrip-holder, being, in his opinion, terms as improper as "*first payment*" applied to the *deposit*. If a contractor has indeed parted with the whole of his scrip, it is certainly true, that he can no longer sustain any pecuniary loss by the fall of that scrip, which is all that the Governor and the Cashier of the Bank seem to have meant; but, is he entitled to no consideration or indemnity for the risk he has run, because it is now past? As well might it be contended, that

an underwriter, after the risk he has insured is over, ought to relinquish or return the premium of insurance.

But Mr. Boyd has, in the letter of 24th of November, relied on the quantity of scrip still held by the contractors, and, therefore, he founded their claim merely on their scrip. What! Is Mr. Boyd to be precluded from the advantage of a sound argument in his favour, because he omitted it in stating his claim, or because, as advocate in his own cause, he advanced another argument which may appear of a less solid nature? Even on the ground of being scrip-holders, the former contractors appear to have held about one million and a half on the 24th of November; and, by a fall of 2 per cent., therefore would have lost 30,000*l.* Boyd's own house, indeed, had not more than half a million, on which they could only have lost, at the same rate, 10,000*l.*; and the principle the 19th resolution would have the House to adopt is, that 10,000*l.* is a matter of no consideration whatever to a mercantile house!

Mr. Boyd alledged in the conversation, and in the subsequent letter, of the 24th of November, and repeats in his evidence, that there was on the whole, at that time, floating in the market, the value of five millions of scrip of the former loan, not then converted into stock. He mentioned the manner in which he made that competition. 500,000*l.* of the English part of that loan, he was informed, remained unpaid up. He knew there remained about half as much of the Austrian part. Knowing that the last payment was 15 per cent., he reckoned the scrip remaining not changed into stock in that proportion, and therefore at the precise amount of five millions. Mr. Boyd had been misinformed, as to the exact amount of what remained to pay on the English part of the loan; it appears by the evidence from the Bank to have been exactly 445,718*l.* instead of 500,000*l.*; a difference however totally immaterial to the argument. Mr. Boyd, as agent, must have been quite correct with regard to the Austrian part. But it seems, by the account from the Bank, that the whole floating scrip, on both the English and Austrian parts of the loan, on the 24th of November, was not five millions but 3,356,265*l.* on which the sums unpaid, whether you take them at 445,718*l.* and 250,000*l.*; or as Mr. Boyd supposed them to be, at 500,000*l.* and 250,000*l.* will not make 15 per cent. How this puzzle arises, was not clearly explained to the Committee; but, on this part of the case, it is of no very material importance to ascertain the exact quantity of floating scrip. The lowest sum was of magnitude enough to render its depreciation an important matter to whomsoever it belonged to claim a consideration for that depreciation; and as to the separation affected to be

made here, of the English from the Austrian scrip, I have never yet been able to see how it bore upon Mr. Boyd's reasoning, whose party had contracted with Government for both. With regard to a consultation with all the actual scrip-holders in November last; besides Mr. Boyd's reason for considering that neither they nor the subscribers have any share or interest in the contractors' right; how would it have been possible to consult them, parcelled out as the scrip may be, in numberless portions and shares of fractional sums, among foreigners, minors, married women, trustees, executors, administrators, &c. ? or how was the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider himself as released from a claim, because they had not met and asserted it, which, as between the contractors and them, might or might not have been in part virtually transferred from the former to the latter ?

On the whole, can it be fairly contended, that, in a new case—with the species of engagement arising out of what had passed on the former occasion, and which seemed by the Governor of the Bank, who was privy to it, and by the report of the city in general, according to Mr. Mellish, to have been considered as a promise,—with all the reasons urged by Messrs. Boyd in their letters and conversation, the nature and weight of which, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to examine, not merely by his own judgment, but by his idea of the *bona fide* impression that they had made on the mind, and the effect they had had on the conduct, of Boyd and his party—can it, I say, be fairly contended, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could disallow the claim, consistently with the attention due from Government to the equitable rights of individuals, in their transactions with them ? *Querenda pecunia primum*, and at the expence of good faith and justice, is a maxim, not more sordid in private life, than it would be discreditable and dangerous in the concerns of the public. It must be observed here, that though the Chancellor of the Exchequer had omitted sending to Mr. Boyd's party, till he had fixed the meeting with the different competitors, i. e. till the 23d, yet he had intended to send to them before that day, had he not found himself obliged to postpone the meeting till the 25th. After he had postponed it, he meant in the interval to send for Messrs. Boyd. That intention was anticipated by their application in their letter of the 23d, they (from an accident stated in Mr. Boyd's evidence) not having had previous intelligence of the postponement.

Cavils have been made on the expression mentioned in Mr. Boyd's evidence to have been used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 25th of November, in opening the claim of Boyd's party, namely, "*that certain circumstances had recently come*

to his knowledge." In Mr. Mellish's examination, the words are stated differently, namely, "*a circumstance which had happened*;" and the gentlemen who attended the Committee will recollect the peculiar anxiety which that gentleman shewed, to deliver, if possible, in every instance, the very words which had been used; it is therefore probable, that *his account of the words* is the most correct. But, at all events, what else could be *their meaning*, but a reference to the very recent circumstance or circumstances of Messrs. Boyd's explicit statement of their claim, and the Governor of the Bank's statement of the fact which had happened in the former year, and of his opinion on the effect of it?

But it seems Mr. Boyd had rendered a service to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the transaction of the Hamburgh bills, of such a nature, as gave him an irresistible claim to an undue preference in the contract for the loan. Shall we try this question on the evidence, or on the nature of the transaction?

Mr. Boyd is the only person examined who knows the circumstances. From his account, it appears, that in the month of August, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked him, if it would be quite convenient for him to anticipate certain portions of the payments on the loan and lottery of last year, which remained unadvanced, and were to fall due in November, December, and January, in case the public service should find such anticipation necessary or convenient? The three last payments in that year's loan of eighteen millions, amounted to 45 per cent, and, notwithstanding the temptation of the discount, it seems, a considerable part of them had not been advanced. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, from two millions to two millions and a half might be wanted. Mr. Boyd's answer was, that, from the abundance of money which then prevailed, he had no doubt of being able to make the anticipation proposed; and being asked concerning the rate of interest, he said, he thought he could not, without the risk of loss, undertake it at less than 5 per cent, though money on bills was then abundant, at 4½, and even 4; because such a large sum might raise the market, and he must probably negotiate the securities given him, by the agency of brokers, at the expense of a commission to them. It was then agreed, that if the money should be required, the interest should be calculated at the rate of 5 per cent. Some farther intercourse, at different times, in conversation, and by letters, took place on the subject, and at last it was explained, that the sum wanted would not exceed one million. With regard to the securities, or mode of re-imburse-

ment, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked Mr. Boyd, in the first conversation, whether Treasury warrants would answer the purpose? As to solidity, Mr. Boyd said, nothing could be more satisfactory, but, that if he should want to realize them before they became due, he could not bring them into the market for negotiation, and it would not be consistent with the credit of his house, to endeavour to raise money upon them. On this, the Chancellor of the Exchequer left it to him to consider of the most convenient mode of re-imbursment, compatible with the forms of the public offices, and, in the result, on his suggestion and desire, the sureties given were bills drawn on the Lords of the Treasury, payable at four months after date, and accepted by Mr. Long, one of the Secretaries to the Treasury. It was in Mr. Boyd's opinion, of great consequence to the success of this operation, that the business should be known to as few persons as possible, because, if known, from the amount of the sum, it would have produced an immediate artificial scarcity of money. He had a cousin, Mr. Boyd, Junior, at Hamburgh, when the matter was first agitated, and who continued there till the end of August, and his plan was, to have the bills drawn by that relation while at Hamburgh, in order to keep the affair as much as possible within the knowledge of his own House. In the mean time, the determination of Government on the subject having been delayed till past the middle of September, Mr. Boyd, Junior, had come to England. Mr. Boyd might then have got some other correspondent at Hamburgh to draw the bills, but by doing so, a new person must have been made privy to the transaction, and he would also have required a commission, which would have enhanced the expence to Government; and therefore, Mr. Boyd proposed, that his cousin, then arrived in London, should still be the drawer of the bills, and should date them from Hamburgh, on a day when he had actually been there, and on which they would, in fact, have been drawn there by him, if the business had taken place when it was first intended. Those bills, though drawn, in fact, in London, were not upon stamped paper, because it was part of the measure that they should bear the date of Hamburgh. Not more than 700,000*l.* was actually advanced. These are all the facts. The reasoning and assertions of the gentlemen on the other side of the House are, that Mr. Boyd had stepped forward, in a most unusual manner, to assist the Treasury, *at the time when the Bank of England would not do it*; that he had engaged Government in a fictitious transaction, such as, according to the opinion of the Governor of the Bank delivered to the Committee, would have injured the credit of any pri-



vate mercantile House; and that the securities given to Mr. Boyd were absolutely null and void, being inland bills of exchange on unstamped paper, so that the holders to whom they might have been negotiated, could not have recovered upon them. Therefore, it is inferred, Mr. Boyd must have expected, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have intended, as a reward for his service, an advantage injurious to the public, in a profitable exclusive bargain for the ensuing loan. This method of reasoning is as little supported by the true state of the evidence, as by sound argument. In the first place, Mr. Boyd positively declares, that he never had entertained any such expectation; that nothing had ever passed to warrant him to entertain such expectation; that there never had existed, on his part, the most distant insinuation of the sort; and that, on all occasions, when such an idea was mentioned, he had never failed to express his indignation. It is true, that, according to Mr. Mellish's account, some such idea appears to have arisen in his (Mr. Mellish) mind, and in that of persons with whom he had conversed. He says, he thought that the transaction might have gained Mr. Boyd some influence with the Minister to obtain a preference. But Mr. Mellish does not appear to have had any acquaintance with the nature of the transaction, nor any information on the subject, beyond that general sort of report which seems to have been circulated by persons indisposed to Mr. Boyd. The Governor of the Bank positively says, that if there had been no other reason in his mind (alluding to the engagement of the year before, as he considered it) he should certainly not have suspected that any preference would be given to Mr. Boyd on account of the anticipation. And, being much pressed, the utmost he could, by a very fair, no doubt, but a very nice and sifting examination, be induced to say, was,—what must be admitted,—simply this, “It could not have put him in a worse situation;” adding, on being still farther urged on a subsequent day to declare whether the Treasury must not have thought themselves indebted to Mr. Boyd; “That he fancied Mr. Boyd was most benefited by the transaction.”

Indeed, on the view of the circumstances, I should be led to think, that Mr. Boyd might have derived a sufficient benefit from the terms of his anticipation, to induce a monied man, at a time when cash was plenty, and discount, therefore, cheap and easy, from that motive alone, to undertake it. When the terms of the interest were agreed on, the money wanted, was stated to be from two to two millions and a half, the interest was 5 per cent, and the discount on bills, perhaps, as low as 4 per cent. On two

three parties, however, having positively refused the qualified bidding, competition could no longer take place, and therefore the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that day came to a final bargain with Messrs. Boyd. Before he concluded, he informed them, as he would have informed the others had they resolved to bid, that besides the loan of eighteen millions, he reserved to himself, among other things, the power, if necessary, of permitting, within the year, a loan to the Emperor of three millions, and also of funding, after the 1st of May, five millions of the navy bills to become due in the course of the year. In the previous interview, that morning, between Messrs. Boyd and Robarts the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Governor of the Bank, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked Messrs Boyd and Robarts, whether they would consent, if the other parties refused the qualified competition, that he should fix the price of the loan; which they said they would. I have heard, and have read in a publication supposed to have come from a quarter acute enough to have furnished observations of more sagacity and weight, that this was a most objectionable part of the transaction; for that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is the very last person in the kingdom to whom such a reference ought to be made. Why? because if he fix the loan on terms of very large profit to the contractors, the world will immediately conclude, that he foresees some public calamity, some disastrous event or other; and, if the terms are comparatively very unprofitable to the lenders, it will be inferred, that he knows of some impending circumstance of good fortune; and the nation will suffer all the ill consequences, in the one case, of groundless dejection, and, in the other, of groundless hope. But by this argument, it might be proved, that neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor any other confidential servant of the King, ought ever to *negotiate and make* the bargain for a loan; because his *assent* to the terms, whether the proposition comes from him or not, may have the same effect.

Let us now proceed to the terms proposed and accepted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer having retired to fix them, asked the Governor and Deputy Governor, the price of stocks on that day, and found it to be, of 3 per cent consols, and reduced,  $67\frac{1}{2}$ , and, of long annuity, eighteen years and a half's purchase. He had, on the 23d of November, agreed, that the loan was to be taken on those funds, the Governor having stated *that* to be the wish of some of the parties who intended to bid. Being informed of the actual price, he asked, whether in the calculation it was not fair to put the 3 per cents at 65? The Governor thinks he might say,

it was. The Chancellor of the Exchequer fixed the quantum of the long annuity himself.

The terms, the House knows, were for every 100l. to be lent, 120l. 3 per cent consols, 25l. 3 per cent reduced, and 6s. 6d. long annuity; the interest on the consols to become due from last Midsummer, and on the reduced, from last Michaelmas; the first half-yearly payment of the long annuity, to be made 5th of April, 1796; the usual discount of 3 per cent on the whole money advanced beyond the instalments up to the last of them, and of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent on advances completing the payments between the deposit (10th of December,) and the 30th of that month.

If we examine the interest and the *bonus* on these terms, we shall find, that the permanent interest is 4l. 13s. 6d. considering the long annuities as perpetual. That annuity being only worth eighteen and a half years purchase, the deduction to be made on that account reduces the annual payments to the value of about 4l. 13s. 2d. per cent. The *bonus* is computed by Mr. Boyd as follows: viz. 145l. 3 per cents. valued at 65l. makes 94l. 5s.;—6s. 6d. long annuity, at eighteen and a half years purchase, 6l. 0s. 3d.—Total, 100l. 5s. 3d. This excess of 5s. 3d. makes part; the rest consists in the difference between  $67\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. (the market price of the stocks,) and 65; and in the discount. He says he recollects nothing else of *bonus*; and he is certainly right; for the dividend accruing on the 145l. 3 per cents. previous to the deposit, is included in the market value of the stock at  $67\frac{1}{2}$ . The honourable mover of the resolutions, in order to establish what he calls the improvidence of the bargain, chooses to employ the dividend two ways, and the discount likewise. He takes them first into the account of the *bonus*, and afterwards, by deducting them from the sums actually advanced, reduces the capital supplied, in order to inflame the rate of interest. This he has no right to do; he must make his choice; and the first is the proper course on the subject.

The amount of the *bonus* then is, 1st, the 5s. 3d. already stated; 2ndly, the  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on 145l. or 3l. 12s. 6d. 3dly, the discount, which, at the rate of 3 per cent. for every 90l.; (the 10 per cent. deposit bearing no discount) is 2l. 14s; Total 6l. 11s. 9d. This, in the fourth year of a war, is certainly far from unreasonable. The honourable gentleman admits that a fair *bonus* may amount to 5 per cent. But, in the first place, how can it be possible to lay down any general rule on the subject? and 2ndly, if the stocks had fallen, from the influx of the new loan, the amount of this *bonus* would have instantly sunk.

Now for the interest. It has been shewn, that the money to be annually paid is 4l. 13s. 6d. and that the value of this is but about 4l. 13s. 2d. for every 100l. The honourable gentleman, forgetting that he had exhausted the power of the dividend and discount in the computation of the *bonus*, comes now and deducts them from every 100l. lent. Together he makes them amount to about 5 per cent; therefore the sum really advanced, he says, is only 95l. for each supposed 100l. and the 4l. 13s. 6d. is in truth paid, not for 100l. but for 95l. The interest, therefore, on the 5l. ought to be added, to get at the real interest payable on the money. This, at the rate only of 4l. 10s. per cent. would be 4s. 6d. Therefore, the annual payment, he says, on every 100l. advanced, is, in reality, above 4l. 18s. But, as has been already just said, this double use of the first dividends and the discount, is absurd, and they having been allowed in the *bonus*, the yearly interest remains at 4l. 13s. 6d. or rather 4l. 13s. 2d. Is this extravagant or improvident, considering all the circumstances? If we were even to value the *bonus*, and convert it into a perpetual annuity, and add the annual produce of that annuity, the whole would very little exceed 5 per cent.

But it seems *it can be proved* that much better terms might have been had from Mr. Morgan; and he or his friends in this House have certainly stated, at different times, that he would have taken the loan, 1st, at 2s. less long annuity; 2ndly, at 2 per cent. less; 3dly, at 3s. less long annuity. In other words, the Public might have saved, by dealing with him, either 330,000l. or 360,000l. or 499,500l. What is the evidence that Mr. Morgan would, in fact, have given any of those terms? We were told that there were persons ready to prove his intentions at the bar. But what does he say himself? Being asked if he had any means of proving the precise terms he had decided to offer on the 25th of November, he answers, "It is impossible, because I myself had not the most distant expectation that the bidding was then to come on." The proof of the intention of abating 2s. long annuity, or 1l. 17s. per cent. of the *bonus*, is the singular offer made to the House on the 7th and 8th of December. That of the 2 per cent. the evidence of a gentleman, (Mr. Terry) to whom Mr. Morgan had said on the day after the loan was agreed upon, that he would have taken it on those terms;—this was a loose declaration at the moment of chagrin and disappointment, which can never be looked upon as any proof of sober and deliberate intention. The proof as to the abatement of the 3s. long annuities, or 2l. 15s. 6d. is still more unsatisfactory. It is the retro-active

divination of Mr. Morgan on the 19th of December, with the impression of the then high price of stock on his mind, of what his intention *might have been* on the 25th of November, if he had formed any intention on that day. The truth is, that if we can rely at all on any of these three statements, it must be on that of the 2s. long annuity, which was made to the House, in the letter addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and read by an honourable gentleman over the way, on the 7th of December.

Mr. Morgan, in that manner, made to the House the extraordinary proposition, that they should dissent from the bargain entered into (as far as he had authority) by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with Messrs. Boyd, and should treat with him (Morgan) *per directum*. It was obvious, that to establish such a precedent required at least, the strongest case that could be made out, of pecuniary advantage to the public. That circumstances may be supposed where such a measure might be fit and necessary, cannot be denied. But it must be a case strong indeed, that could justify it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is, by long usage, founded in the nature of his office, the representative of the government, the keeper of the national faith and honour, in regard to pecuniary transactions with individuals. Men have been taught, by the uniform experience of many years, to consider themselves as safe in acting on the credit of his contracts, and secure of their confirmation and sanction by Parliament. A case, I say, might arise where such sanction ought to be withheld; but, without some other motive, it is not, in my humble opinion, the contingent or accidental loss of 333,000*l.* or twice that sum, or perhaps ten times that sum, which would warrant such a proceeding. It would have been an idea much less extravagant; (extravagant as that would have been) it would be less extravagant in any case, to say Parliament will take care that the same person shall no longer remain in a situation where he can, by improper bargains, sacrifice, in the manner he has done, the public interest; than to propose to rescind the bargain already made. Yet even that is still less extraordinary than that most exceptional of all imaginable propositions which was coupled with it in the present instance, viz. that Parliament should itself become its own executive agent, and make a new contract;—not by competition, however, but exclusively, with a contractor palpably preferred, and without even a pretence for such preference,—with Mr. Morgan,—at the bar of this House.

Mr. Morgan either did or did not seriously mean and hope that his offer, on the 7th of December, would be accepted. On the first hypothesis, he would certainly offer the very best terms for the

public which he thought he could possibly afford, in order to induce the House to act in a manner so anomalous, and, as he *must* have thought, so unwise and unjust, unless upon the most powerful motives of public advantage. On the second supposition, he would, in like manner, strain his self-denying calculations to their utmost credible limits, for the sole purpose he could have in view on this supposition, namely, that of shewing to the world the immense loss which had been sustained by the public from Mr. Boyd's being the purchaser of the loan instead of himself. We may therefore assume it as certain, that the abatement of 2s. on the long annuity was the utmost deduction from Mr. Boyd's terms, which Mr. Morgan thought he could possibly offer to make, and that his retrospective guess on this subject when examined before the Committee, was founded on a total misconception of what would have been the real state of his own mind and intentions, if the case had happened which never did happen, of his making a proposal on the 25th of November. For it would be absurd, under the circumstances, to listen to Mr. Morgan's explanation of the difference between his actual offer to the House, and his conjectural offer as guessed at by himself in his examination. He then said, On the 7th of December, in my letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I was not offering the lowest terms for myself I could have afforded to take, but terms sufficiently better for the public than those of Mr. Boyd, to induce the House to give them the preference. Either what has been just said on the motives which must have governed him in settling his offer of the 7th December, is as nugatory and idle as it appears to be conclusive, or this plea of Mr. Morgan's is totally inadmissible.

Let us now, therefore, examine, in a few words, the amount of the difference, in point of emolument to Mr. Morgan, on the 7th of December, between his terms of 4s. 6d. long annuity, and Mr. Boyd's of 6s. 6d. on the 25th of November. Mr. Morgan expected the same quantity of 3 per cent. stock that had been given to Mr. Boyd. Now that stock had, in the mean time, risen 1 per cent. or, on 145l. nearly 1l. 10s. The 2s. long annuity, which Mr. Morgan would have abated, amounts, at eighteen years and a half purchase, to 1l. 17s per cent: this he was willing to lose. But, on the other hand, we have just seen, that he had gained, in the mean time, 1l. 10s. per cent. by the rise of the stocks: there remains, therefore, on this ground only 7s. loss to Mr. Morgan. But, in all his computations, either stated by the honourable Chairman of the Committee, and his other friends in this House, or in his own examination, Mr. Morgan has over-

valued the discount; he has put it at 3 per cent. He had overlooked the nature of the deposit, and that the 3 per cent. could only be received on the 90l. which, as has been shewn, amounts to no more than 2l. 14s. on each 100l. The additional  $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. for advances between the 10th and 30th December, would make some addition to this computation; but most probably nothing of material consequence on the whole loan. Can it be supposed, that if Mr. Morgan had really been serious, or when he came to adjust—in some other way than by letters read from the opposite side of this House as part of a speech, (instead of being sent to the person to whom they were addressed) or by harangues and motions in Parliament,—the terms of his proposal, that he would not have discovered and made an allowance, or surcharged his offer, to the amount (in his own favour) of the difference between 3l. and 2l. 14s. per cent?—It would be overstraining the compliment to his liberality and public spirit, to think so. Here then is a deduction of 6s. per cent. more from Mr. Morgan's advance on Mr. Boyd, considered in the view of abatement of profit to Mr. Morgan. Take 6 from 7, and there remains 1s. in every pound, or 9,000l. on the 18 millions, as the most that Mr. Morgan was willing to abate—Mr. Morgan, who treats it as quite a ridiculous thought to suppose that any man would take a loan on such terms as that he might not dispose, the next moment, of his bargain, at a profit of much more than 10s. per cent. or 90,000l. on 18 millions!

In comparing Mr. Morgan's ideas of what he might have offered on the 25th of November, with the terms concluded on with Mr. Boyd, we must not lose sight of the reserves specified in the bargain, and of which Mr. Morgan was not apprised. The chief of these were an Austrian loan of 3 millions, and the funding of 5 millions of navy bills. Mr. Morgan, indeed, in his evidence, says, "That those circumstances would have made no difference in his terms, for that his mind was made up to them;" and he explains his opinion to have been decidedly, that no Austrian loan could take place. However, in another part he admits, that if, on the 25th of November, he had been informed, as a matter of certainty, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would make an Austrian loan of 3 millions, it would have been proper to postpone the bidding to see the effect, which he thinks would have been to lower the funds. Between a positive intention of such a loan, and the absolute impossibility of it, there is a middle case, namely, a power reserved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make it. Mr. Morgan would never have supposed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have stipulated for such a reserve, if he had

not had some idea that he might find it necessary to avail himself of it ;—and that, in such a case, Mr. Morgan would not have suffered his own *speculative* impossibility totally to supersede, in forming his offer, the effect of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's *practical* intention, one may infer from the purport of his letter of the 16th of November, which makes the first number in the Appendix to the Report.

The Governor of the Bank says, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer made the reserve, he did not know but an Austrian loan might take place, and that, with his opinion of the probability of that event, he should, if he had been a competitor, have offered somewhat worse terms for the loan, on that account. As to the funding five millions of navy debt, Mr. Morgan indeed answers in the lump to that and the Austrian loan ; but there is nothing specific in his evidence, upon this point of the navy bills, taken distinctly and separately. This was probably not his fault ; but, if a fault, that of the Committee, in not examining him specifically with regard to it. But the Governor of the Bank expressly says, that the funding the five millions instead of their being paid in ready money, would have had an effect on the terms of the loan, (i. e. in his offer, had he been a bidder), of which he could not state the extent, but certainly to the extent of much more than a half per cent.

The next objection is founded on the particular fund given for the loan. With what other view, it is asked, but to occasion an undue advantage to Messrs. Boyd, was the fund entirely in the 3 per cents ? This, it is said, was contrary to all former practice ; and was connected with an operation of the Commissioners for reducing the national debt, also unusual, and calculated for the same partial and iniquitous purpose. I confess I cannot repress the indignation I feel at this insinuation of a breach of so sacred a trust, by men not more eminent in situation than distinguished for high honour and unimpeached integrity :—men, of whom I would say more if I were speaking in any other place, or addressing any other person ; [the Speaker is an acting Commissioner.] The operation was a purchase, in November, of 4 per cents, whereas the former purchases had always been of 3 per cents. This is hinted to have been done, at once to raise the 4 per cents. that Mr. Boyd or his friends, who are assumed to have had large sums in that stock, might sell out of them to advantage, and to sink the 3 per cents. (by a decrease of demand) that they might be as low as possible when the loan came forward, so as to entitle the contractor to a large amount of them in the price of his loan.



To eke out this argument, though in a manner perfectly unintelligible, it is stated, in the 32d resolution, that 685,000*l.*, or (as the honourable mover has to-day desired it to be corrected from the Report, p. 100) 649,750*l.* 4 per cents were, on the 24th of November, in pledge at the Bank. Was the concerted plan of raising the value of that stock to benefit the Bank on account of this pledge? Who will suppose that the Bank, in lending money on this sort of mortgage or hypothecation, had gone in its advances so near the value of the subject pledged, as that it should signify in the least to them, whether the value of that pledge rose or fell 1, 2, or 10 per cent? But perhaps Mr. Boyd had a great share of these pledged 4 per cents. It was probably with a view to discover this that he was asked in the Committee, what the amount was of 4 per cent. scrip, which he held in the former loan, at any time subsequent to the two first payments. His answer was, "I certainly held none, as far as I can speak from memory."—The real reason which induced the Commissioners, in their quarterly order, at the beginning of November, to authorise their broker, at his discretion, during that quarter, to purchase in the 4 per cents, will be found to have been, that the 3 per cent. consols are shut during nearly the two last months of that quarter; and it had been observed, that as the 3 per cents reduced is a fund of very small comparative amount, purchases in that stock had always the effect of producing an extraordinary rise. It is not unworthy of remark, in this place, that it has hitherto been a general topic of blame with certain persons, that the Commissioners had not purchased by preference in the 4 per cents. But the instant they adopt that measure, the former reasoning is laid aside, and nothing but undue motives occur for their conduct.—Did, however, the 4 per cents rise, and the 3 per cents either sink, or not rise in a proportionable ratio, in consequence of this operation, towards the time of the negotiation for the loan? On Tuesday, the 3d of November, the day on which the first purchase of 4 per cents was made by the Commissioners, they closed at 85 and an half. They had closed the day before, (Monday) at 85. On the Saturday they had been at 83 and an half. The 4 per cent. consols were on the Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday, at about 68 and an half. But on the 24th of November, the 4 per cents. had fallen again to 83 and an half, which, or something less, was also their price on the 25th and the 3 per cents had only sunk 1 per cent. But, it is asked, why did the Chancellor of the Exchequer give the whole stock in 3 per cents contrary to former practice? First, It is not true that the contrary practice has been

universal: There have been loans before where the only perpetual annuity given, was in the 3 *per cents*. Secondly, The lender's choice must have a considerable share in deciding the nature of the consideration which he is to receive for his money. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, as appears from the Governor of the Bank's evidence, had never mentioned to him in what funds the new capital was to be created; but some of the parties who meant to offer, having told the Governor that they wished to have 3 per cents, he communicated this to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 23d of November, and he did not object to it. Mr. Morgan says, he was asked, (I presume, by the Governor of the Bank) if he had any objection to the capital being 3 per cents, and he does not appear to have made any. Thirdly, It is a matter of frequent discussion, and a subject of great difference of opinion, whether it is not, as a general rule, much better to borrow on a capital bearing a low interest, for which, as being, for obvious reasons, the more marketable commodity, you can always get more money in respect of the annuity you are to pay for it, than on a capital with a higher interest, and for which you must pay a larger proportionable annuity.

There remains now only to consider the question of the time when the contract was made, compared with that on which the King's message was delivered.

The summary of the charge on this head is, that both the intention of sending such a message, and the effect it would have on the funds, must have been foreseen on the 25th of November; that the bargain, therefore, should have been postponed, till after the delivery of the message, or the message delivered sooner: and that it is clear, the bargain might have been postponed, because it was not brought before the House till the 7th of December; (a thing, it is said, highly culpable, as contrary to established usage) and the first deposit not required till the 10th. As to the intention of delivering the message, the mere assertion—founded on conjecture—of those who make this objection, is met by the assertion of the person who delivered the message,—who must know the fact, and who asserts it in the presence of the only other persons here who can know it, namely, His Majesty's other confidential servants in this House. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us, under such circumstances, that he did not know of His Majesty's intention to send such a message at the time of the contract, is it candid, or is it possible, to refuse credit to that declaration?

I beg leave to take this opportunity of saying a few words on one of the arguments, on the subject of Mr. Boyd's claim, which

escaped me in its proper place. It is said, if Mr. Boyd's claim was solid, why not have made a partial or short loan of 2 or 3 millions from him at that time, to answer the most pressing exigencies, deferring the rest till after the termination of all the payments on the former loan. The answer which has been given to this is, that it was obviously of the utmost consequence, at the beginning of the session, to impress the enemy with a just idea of the great extent and promptitude of our resources for the subsequent campaign; and that they would have drawn quite a different conclusion from the circumstance of a small loan of 2 or 3 millions. But, in reply, it is stated, that this effect might have been prevented by a declaration, at the time, that a subsequent farther loan was intended. Were the French then bound to give faith to such a declaration, or to the success of such subsequent loan? And have they any certain means of being set right in the mistakes they may fall into relative to the acts of our Government, or the dispositions of our people?

To return to the King's message. If it was not foreseen at the time when the contract was made, it could afford no reason to have induced a postponement of that contract. But it is said, the loan ought to have been deferred, (as in former wars) till within a day or two of the time when it was submitted to this House, and then the message might probably have preceded it. The same motives which rendered it expedient to make the loan before the winding up of the former, made it probably expedient to conclude the bargain at the time when it was in fact concluded; and there seems no reason to doubt that it was the original intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to communicate it to the House immediately. One can easily discover a sufficient explanation of the interval which happened at last to intervene between the bargain and the statement of it to Parliament, in the importance and urgency of the measures which occupied in a manner the whole attention of the House during that interval. Every body must recollect, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had fixed various earlier days for the Budget, and that he was prevented from time to time by the interposition of other matters of a still more pressing nature. But was the message, in fact, such "that it was impossible not to foresee that advance in the public funds which took place after it;" and which amounts on the 18 millions to 900,000*l.* as affirmed by the 31<sup>st</sup> Resolution, computing it at 5 per cent, or at 12 per cent, according to the 39<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Resolutions; to more than 2,000,000*l.* It certainly did not appear to many of the Members of this House of a nature likely to produce such effects. To many it seemed to say little if any thing more than the speech from the

Throne had done; taken together with the explanations given by the Minister on the first day of the session; with this difference, that the speech announced a plan of conduct in the event of a contingency which was then foreseen as possible; the contingency was known to have happened before the message was delivered, and the message expressly declared the very same plan of conduct, as then fixed by the event, which had before been announced by the speech. The speech (and comment) the moment after that event was known, had virtually done the same thing. It may, perhaps, be said, that the speech of the right honourable gentleman on the first day of the session could not have equal publicity, and did not possess the same authority which belongs to a formal message from the Throne. But, considering the manner in which every thing of importance which passes here is reported and circulated out of doors, and all over Europe, and the situation which the right honourable gentleman holds in his Majesty's Councils, it is impossible to allow much for the different effects in the one case and the other. Sir, what did the gentlemen over the way foresee on the occasion? They had the same means of prediction or conjecture on the subject, at the time the message was delivered, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Did they clearly perceive that the funds would rise 5 per cent, or the loan-*omnium* 12 per cent, upon Mr. Boyd's contract? This is impossible; for that very evening they again moved, on the Report of the Committee of Supply, what the day before they had moved in that Committee; not that a new competition should be opened, to afford the Public the benefit of the enormous rise which was about to happen, and save to the nation 900,000*l.* or 2,160,000*l.*; no; they only proposed to change the 6*s.* 6*d.* into 4*s.* 6*d.*—to substitute Mr. Morgan for Mr. Boyd,—at a national profit on Boyd's terms of 333,000*l.* though at a loss to Morgan on those terms (considering the rise which had already taken place in the stocks, since the 25th of November,) of only 9000*l.* and at an advantage to him, out of the public pocket, according to the calculations of to-day, of 2,160,000*l.* *minus* his 2*s.* 6*d.*; or of clear 1,727,000*l.* Sir, it would be equally unjust to the good sense and the public spirit of those gentlemen, to suppose, that they could have held such a conduct, foreseeing what we are now told it was impossible not to foresee. They could have no predilection for Mr. Morgan more than for Mr. Boyd; their only object was undoubtedly a saving to the Public; and they therefore proposed to accept Mr. Morgan's offer, conceiving that the utmost probable rise consequent on the message would be something

between 1 and 2 per cent. on the sum borrowed, i. e. little more than 1 per cent on the 3 per cent funds.

Is it necessary, after having detained the House so long, to observe, that between the bargain, and the time of the great rise which took place, news had arrived; and was arriving every day; of the great successes of the *Austrians* on the *Rhine*? Is it necessary to observe, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been able to foresee, that by some of those illusions so common on the stock exchange, the message would produce effects so disproportioned to its true nature and tendency as it seems to have done, and if it had been in his power to deliver the message previous to making the contract, it would have been unworthy of him, and of the nation, to have taken advantage of such an illusion, transient of course, and which, when dissipated, might have left the persons who had made their bargain under its temporary influence, either ruined and undone, or entitled to resort to the justice of this House for redress and indemnification. It is, I believe, an established maxim in finance, that Government may make *too good* terms in borrowing money, and for the reason just alluded to, viz, that in case of a loss accruing to the lenders, they ought not to be permitted to stand to that loss. At least, the trade and credit of the country must suffer by such a circumstance, and the Public would not find it possible; when another loan should be wanted, to get the money but on the most extravagant conditions. The history of some past loans will be found to verify the truth of this observation.

But what strange, uncandid method of computation has furnished the 2,160,000*l.* as the loss on the late loan? No allowance is made for fair profit; no consideration of the impossibility of selling all the loan suddenly, without as suddenly precipitating the premium upon it; no recollection of the known practice of loan-holders to keep it back, and only part with it piece-meal and by degrees, in order not to glut the market; no attention to the evidence which the late prices furnish of the short duration of the impression which the too sanguine hopes excited by the message and other circumstances had made.

I trust, Sir, that I have satisfied the House, that we are bound not only not to assent to any of the 40 propositions offered to our consideration, but that justice requires us to go much farther. The right honourable gentleman, after having acted in the execution of a necessary and important, but certainly an irksome and invidious part of his duty, in the only manner in which he could reconcile the public interest and the public honour to what was due to individuals, has been attacked on grounds totally inconsistent with the

established facts, and the true and sound arguments of the case. I say, therefore, that in justice to him,—whose situation is such, that false imputations on his public conduct, especially in the delicate transactions of finance, cannot be suffered to pass away in a silent negative, without manifest public inconvenience and detriment,—we must vindicate him, by a direct assertion of the true result of the inquiries of your Committee, and the substitution of merited applause and approbation, in the room of the extravagant, contradictory, and groundless censure, which the honourable gentleman has proposed to the House to pronounce.

Mr. *Douglas* then moved his amendment to the first resolution, having previously read both that, and the two others, which, if the whole 40 should be moved and disposed of, (the first by amendment, the intervening thirty-seven by the previous question, and the two last by rejection,) he proposed to substitute in their place.

Resolutions. “First. That it appears to this House, that the principle of making loans for the public service by competition, which was introduced, and has in general been acted upon, by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been productive in many instances of great public advantage; but that this principle could not be applied in its full extent, to the bargain for the late loan, consistently with the peculiar circumstances of the case, and with that attention to the equitable claims of individuals, which ought always to be shewn in transactions with them on the behalf of the Public.”

“Secondly, That it appears to this House, that the terms of the loan were fixed, with a due regard to the magnitude of the sums borrowed, and provided for, as well as to the market price of the funds, and the situation of public affairs, at the time the bargain was concluded.”

“Thirdly, That it appears to this House, that in every part of the transaction of the late loan, the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was actuated by a view to the public interest; and that there is no ground to suppose, that any interference took place on the part of any persons connected with Government, in the distribution of any part of the said loan.”

Mr. FRANCIS said that, altho' he was but little prepared and not at all inclined to enter far into the debate, and tho' he was full of impatience and curiosity to know what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to say for himself, or whether he would be content to rest his defence on the ground taken, and trust it to the arguments used by the learned gentleman, nevertheless there were some passages in that gentleman's speech, of which he thought himself

board not only as a Member of Parliament, but especially as a diligent if not very active Member of the Committee, to take some notice. On those particulars I shall first endeavour to set the House right, and to prevent their being misled. Not that the facts, stated by the learned gentleman, are very material in themselves, but because some serious conclusions have been fallaciously drawn from them. I shall then endeavour to shew that the learned gentleman, in the general drift and tendency of his speech, has laboured to divert the attention of the House from the real object of the inquiry, and to fix it on others, not immediately in question, or not essential to the point in issue, namely, whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer has or has not made a provident bargain for the Public; and, if he has not, to what motives his misconduct may fairly and rationally be imputed. The first may possibly be proved; the second can only be matter of moral inference or unavoidable conclusion, and never the subject, or very rarely, of direct evidence. No man accused has a right, in the first instance, to plead character against conduct, or expect us to conclude that he has acted faithfully, because the worst motives possible are not to be proved by witnesses against him. Almost the whole of the learned gentleman's speech has been a digression from the question. He has incessantly travelled out of the record; but I flatter myself that, before I sit down, I shall be able to bring him back to it.

The learned gentleman has thought fit to open his defence of this transaction by a triumphant appeal to the opinion of the Committee, declared in the outset and stated in the front of their report, viz. "that, on the inspection of the lists, as well as from the examination of the parties, your Committee see no ground to suppose, that any interference took place, on the part of any persons connected with Government, in the distribution of any part of the loan." And this declaration, he says, was made with the unanimous concurrence of the Committee, and expressly of the Chairman and his colleagues; a description of a part of the Committee not very parliamentary in point of form, and perfectly unjust in its application. The word *colleague*, applied in that manner, would have no meaning, if it were not intended to intimate that the Committee was banded into parties, one of which was determined to censure and to condemn; and that the opinion, if agreed to by two or three of us, who might be supposed to attend on the part of opposition, must be unquestionably true in itself, and in all its consequences. Now, Sir, I can affirm for one, and I believe it will not be denied by any, that, altho' I attended the Committee

constantly 'till the last two or three days, when I conceived the business was in effect over, and that nothing remained to close the proceedings but a repetition of the same formal question to the several subscribers, I took but little part, certainly not an eager part, in the inquiry. I asked some of the witnesses a very few questions, and left it to the honourable gentlemen on the other side, whose superior numbers, generally ten to one, gave them an absolute command of the inquiry, to conduct it as they pleased. I was not present, when the preamble to the Report was voted. I had neither notice nor suspicion, that it was intended to introduce such a declaration into a Report of Evidence. Otherwise, assuredly I should have attended on purpose to oppose it. In this sense then, and with this explanation, the resolution of the Committee was not unanimous. In any other, the unanimity, in which the learned gentleman triumphs; proves nothing. It was properly and exclusively the act of himself and his friends. I now object to it as not only untrue in the available meaning and effect of unanimity, which amounts to nothing unless it includes the opinion of your opponent; but as utterly irregular, and in every point of view inconclusive. In the first place, I affirm that the declaration, whether true or not, ought not to have been forced into the Report. The Committee was appointed to "inquire into the circumstances of the "negociation of the late loan, and *were empowered* only to report "the evidence, as it should appear to them, to the House." On the result or effect of that evidence or any part of it, they had no authority to report an opinion. Nor could they have it otherwise than by express terms in the resolution of the House. But, waving this objection, which *in limine* is decisive, let us consider a little what the declaration in itself amounts to, and, taken with all its circumstances, what weight should be allowed to it. The Committee say, that, *on inspection of the lists, &c., they see no ground to suppose that any interference has taken place, &c.* Be it so.—Is that enough? Does the *contrary* appear from the evidence? If it does not, the negative proposition leaves its own question untouched. I know very well that the lists, produced to the Committee, with respect to the interference in question, prove nothing; and that the publication of them was said to be withheld for fear of injuring bankers and other persons in business, who were great subscribers, and who might be suspected of not dividing fairly with their customers. But, if you look into the Report, you will find that sums little short of millions are still covered by single names, the distribution of which was never known to the Committee.

For one example out of many.



Question to *Mr. Goldsmid*.

Is the whole of the remainder, amounting to 3,492,000*l.* for yourself only?

*A.* No.

Q. Will you state to the Committee how much of that sum is for yourself, and the names of the persons, among whom the remainder is distributed?

*A.* 482,000*l.* is for my brother and myself. As to the remaining 3,010,000*l.* I can't give up a list, *as I was in honour bound not to do so.*

With a number of such facts before us, is it possible to contend that any affirmative proof arises, from an inspection of the lists or any other part of the evidence, that *no* interference did take place, on the part of any persons connected with Government, in the distribution of any part of the loan? But, unless that proposition be maintained, the opinion of the Committee is not only irregular, but useless and unavailing to the purpose, for which it was produced and insisted on by the learned gentleman. These objections, in my judgement, are fatal to the opinion in itself. Let us see what importance it derives from the persons, who concurred in it. I am not speaking of the formal constitution of the Committee, but of the materials, of which it was in fact composed. Individually without doubt the Members, who attended most diligently, and who had an entire command of the proceedings, are entitled to all manner of consideration and respect. They are all honourable men, and, in proportion to their sense of honour, most likely to be influenced in favour of their benefactor. I shall describe them by their stations only; and, that I may do even that without a risk of offence, I shall state the case in another form, sufficient for my own purpose, and not liable to an invidious construction. Suppose my right honourable friend near me had been Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that a question had arisen concerning the integrity of his conduct in some transaction of his office. I ask this House, I ask every man of common sense, who hears me, whether the unanimous opinion of two Secretaries of the Treasury, of two Paymasters General, and of twenty members of the Boards of Admiralty, Treasury and Controul, all appointed by himself, would have the weight of a feather to satisfy the world, that his conduct had been pure and irreproachable? On this part of the subject I shall only add, that my right honourable friend, whether guilty or innocent, has too much discernment and knowledge of the world, to rely on such miserable evidence for his acquittal. I shall dwell but little on the other parts of the learned gentleman's speech, be-

cause it appears to me that the whole of it runs in a false direction, and that, if his particular observations were ever so true, they would not lead the House to a just conclusion on the body and substance of the transaction before us. In defence or behalf of the proposed resolutions, it would be in vain for me to address myself to the learned gentleman. He has loudly declared that, *whether true or false*, he was determined to reject them all. Against so vigorous and intrepid an effort of resolution, I know it would be in vain to apply any arguments of mine; so I shall leave him undisturbed in the possession of it. He has said a great deal with great asperity, and I think with no little injustice, against the credibility of Mr. Morgan's evidence, grounded on the extreme interest, which he supposes Mr. Morgan to have had to misrepresent such parts of the Minister's conduct as affected himself, and to state them in his own favour. He has also taken pains to prove that Mr. Morgan was not injured, and had no reason to complain. Well, Sir, I, at least have no personal interest in defending Mr. Morgan. I never saw him before the day when he first attended the Committee, and then I must confess that, in his temper and deportment, I saw no indications of deep design, of cool, thoughtful, guarded cunning. To judge of him by appearances, there never was a man so little qualified by nature for the part of an impostor. He must be an idiot indeed, who could be imposed upon by Mr. Morgan. I gave him credit for what he said, because he said nothing but what was probable. On the other hand, if, with the most unimpeached character, he had stated things utterly improbable, his character alone would not have secured his evidence from suspicion. In by much the greatest part of it, he was supported by the concurring testimony of all the other witnesses. On that assertion, on which the learned gentleman denies that any credit is due to Mr. Morgan, and which, as he affirms, must have been a mere after-thought and subsequent invention, when he knew the terms on which the loan was actually settled with Mr. Boyd, viz. "that on the 25th of November, " *if he had been called upon on that day he would have offered those* " terms for the loan; which he stated to the Committee, and by " which, if they had been accepted, an advantage of 499,500l. " would have accrued to the Public," I, for one, declare most solemnly that I give Mr. Morgan entire credit. Because I know that, on those terms, the loan would still have been extremely profitable to the subscribers, and because I have good reason to believe, from particular inquiry, that men of the first property in the city would have been glad to have gone halves with Mr. Morgan in that bargain. I do not mean *now*, and with their *present* knowledge, but

on the 25th of November and with all the circumstances in their view, by which transactions of this sort are commonly governed, as they actually stood on that day. As to motives of a great interest, which might influence the testimony, and lessen the credit of Mr. Morgan, let it be remembered that all the competitors had an interest of the same kind, and full as considerable as he had. To believe by selection is mere partiality, and indicates an interest in the examiner just as much as in the witness. But what is all this to the purpose? What have we to do with Mr. Morgan's interest, or with the injury, which, in his own opinion or any other, he is supposed to have suffered? The learned gentleman travels out of the record. In the resolutions now proposed to you by the Chairman of the Committee, there is not a single word on either of those points. The true and only object of inquiry both here and in the Committee is, whether the interest of the Public was or was not faithfully guarded by their representative and trustee, the Chancellor of the Exchequer; whether the Public has or has not been essentially injured by any act or omission of his in the settlement of that loan, which he had at his sole disposal.

But it seems Mr. Morgan is not to be credited, because he suspected the Chancellor of the Exchequer of collusion with Mr. Boyd? Was *he* the only person, to whom that suspicion occurred?—Look at the evidence of Mr. Mellish. That gentleman's character at least is unsuspected. "When Mr. Boyd and Mr. Robarts were called out of the room at Mr. Pitt's, (on the 25th of November,) I had a suspicion that it would not be by competition, and said, *hey day!* a Secret Committee!" I believe, Sir, I shall be able to make it appear that what then was suspicion to Mr. Mellish, should now be conviction to this House. The learned gentleman objects, with all possible vehemence and indignation, to the two last Resolutions, as if they contained propositions palpably false or monstrously absurd. The former asserts, and to that part of it I confine myself at present, that the loan was a *gift* to Mr. Boyd. The evidence proves that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had uniformly professed and held up the principle of free and open competition, and who had invited the competitors to his house to bid for the loan, did, on the 25th of November for the first time, and after a separate conference with one of the parties, propose to the other competitors another principle of what is called a *qualified* competition, which they instantly refused, and which the Governor of the Bank tells you, that *in their place, he would not have accepted*. Mr. Boyd says, "We were very willing to leave the fixing of the price of the loan to the Chancellor of the Exchequer." The

Governor of the Bank says, " Their answer was, that they would " trust to Mr. Pitt's candour, and take it on his own terms." And, *in a few minutes*, the loan was theirs. If this be not a gift, in all its effects, I should be curious to hear the learned gentleman's definition of that word, and, supposing it a gift, in what terms he would describe it. The learned gentleman does not deny the previous conference, alluded to in the third Resolution, but he objects to calling it *separate*. The epithet, it seems, is invidious, and calculated to convey a false idea of the conference, as if it had been *secret*, whereas it was held in presence of the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank.—True, it was so. Still the conference was separate, in the terms and meaning of the Resolution. It was held with one of the parties, while the other two were excluded. The competitors were assembled, by appointment from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to bid for the loan, as they thought, on equal terms. The Governor of the Bank says, that on the 23d of November, " I " asked him pointedly the question, *Whether it was to be by competition?* and he told me, *certainly it would*, and that I might tell " the gentlemen ;—and *then* my suspicions were done away." When the parties meet, the first thing that happens, is a separate conference with one of them ; the next, a proposal to the other two to bid for the loan on terms incompatible with the principle of free and open competition.

The last of the Resolutions is that, which fills the learned gentleman with particular indignation, which he can no way endure, and which he will not only negative, but substitute another of his own in the room of it. Now, Sir, let this proposed Resolution be ever so defective, or ever so false and unjust, he ought at all events to state it fairly. He asks, whether it be possible to advance a proposition more extravagant and absurd, than that two millions and a half have been given to the contractors for the loan, and lost to the public. The learned gentleman is not very exact in stating large sums. For shortness I suppose, or to save time, or to speak in round numbers, he always calls it two millions and a half, when the Resolutions specify two millions one hundred and sixty thousand pounds. At this precise sum the Resolutions estimate *the profits to the contributors at the expense of the nation* ; but do not say that it was given to the *contractors*, or that the whole of it was lost to the nation. Undoubtedly a fair and reasonable profit to the contributors ought to be allowed and deducted. The remainder is evidently given away. But the *whole* premium is truly stated as a profit to the contributor. There is no other way of describing it.

At 12 per cent. on eighteen millions it amounts to 2,160,000*l*. I know that at one period the premium on the loan rose to twelve and an half per cent., and that some of the principal holders of *omnium* did not sell at that price or near it, as they might have done, because they expected it to rise to fifteen or sixteen; and so it would without doubt, if the expectations, fallaciously held out by the King's message of the 8th of December, had not been defeated by the subsequent conduct of Government. What the real intention of the message was, I know not; but I know that it was calculated to answer a purpose, that it had a considerable effect, and that, since that time, the contents of it have been discarded and forgotten.

I shall now endeavour, Sir, to state to the House, as briefly and distinctly as I can, what in my judgment, *are not*, and then what *are* the true essential points in issue, between those who applaud, and those who condemn the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this transaction, and which alone deserve the attention of the House. Every attempt to shift the question or the charge from its real ground is, in some degree, an admission. Men of experience and ability, who know the consequence, would not resort to bad logic, or to false ground, if they felt themselves strong, in fair and honourable argument, on the real merits of the subject. The line of examination, which the right honourable gentleman's friends incessantly pursued in the Committee, tended to prove some propositions, which were not in dispute. The honourable Secretary of the Treasury, I am sure, will remember my having said expressly that the result, though ever so favourable to him, would be superfluous, that it was a defence without a charge, and that I cautioned him against the natural inference that must be drawn from that mode of proceeding. They adhered to it in the Committee, and they rely upon it in the debate. We shall see with what effect. I assert then that, admitting the learned gentleman to have *proved*, to his own entire satisfaction, that there is no ground to suspect the Chancellor of the Exchequer of having turned the loan to his own account, or even of having distributed any portion of it among his friends in either House of Parliament, to reward or corrupt them, which for the present I neither affirm nor deny, he has proved nothing to the purpose. He has resisted vigorously where there was no attack, and exhibited great courage, where there was no danger. He knows very well how difficult if not impossible it is, even in the grossest transactions, to obtain direct proof of corruption between Ministers and Members of Parliament. He knows,

or ought to know that, in the present case, that sort of charge was never attempted. My honourable friend, who moved the inquiry, not only did not lay prostitution or corruption to the charge of the Minister, in the sense taken by the learned gentleman, but did expressly and repeatedly disclaim it. So did I and others in the Committee. Not that the contrary has by any means been made out in evidence. Of such propositions, the negative is full as difficult to prove, as the affirmative. We said, and we adhere to it, that it appeared to us that a most improvident bargain had been made for the public. We say now, and we have proved it, that, *in every part of the transaction of the late loan, the public interest has been sacrificed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.* If I am asked, *what could be his motives*, my answer is that I cannot penetrate into the hearts of men, or judge of their intentions otherwise than by facts and circumstances, and by a comparison between conduct and professions; but that in this case, in my opinion, sufficient ground is laid for all the conclusions drawn by the Resolutions. That point shall be considered in its place. If I am asked, whether I suspect the right honourable gentleman of personal corruption in this business? I answer frankly and without reserve, NO. I scorn to insinuate what I do not believe. Neither do I pretend to have ground to believe that the loan was distributed among the Members of this House, and therefore, I say nothing on that head. The distribution, *in the city of London*, speaks for itself. In that quarter undoubtedly, I suspect that corruption was intended, because I see the effect: I see an exorbitant profit given, and a corresponding conduct in those, who received it. *But the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his own person, is immaculate! You may prove any thing else; but, since you cannot prove that he kept a share in the loan for his own use, your objections and your charges signify nothing.* That is, we have proved nothing, because we have not proved what we did not alledge. But after all, Sir, is it much to say, for a man in his elevated situation; for a man of his understanding, that he is not vile enough and fool enough to take money in his office! Could he do it, without the assistance of a middle man, of an agent? Must he not employ a banyan; and if he trusted himself to a third person in a business so full of danger and difficulty, must he not be at once in the power of that person, and his slave for ever? In all these transactions, there is undoubtedly a clear, available profit to the Minister. But who is it suspects him of taking it in specie? The thing is morally impossible. I acquit him on his understanding.

• In all the preceding observations, Sir, I have intended little

more than to clear the ground, and open my way to the body of the question. I shall state it now in the only form in which I think it ought to be stated to a popular assembly, and in which I can hope to make myself understood. Minute calculations of pounds or pence would not be attended to, nor would they be intelligible, at least with any explanations of mine. I may not succeed in ascertaining the precise motives, on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has acted. But that he has acted on motives inconsistent with his duty, and that he has wilfully sacrificed the public interest, (in such a man I cannot attribute any thing to ignorance or surprise,) of which he was the appointed guardian, the special trustee,—these propositions, I am sure I can make out. By what evidence? By a concurrence of undisputed facts and of circumstances, which cannot lie, and all of them meeting in one central point, the profit of the contractors. I shall bring them together as closely, and compare them as accurately as I can; and then let it be seen whether, so collected and so compared, they do not amount to a moral proof, whether they do not force you to a conclusion, which, whatever you may say, the human mind is not made to resist. Judgment is not yet at the command of volition. If it were, the right honourable gentleman undoubtedly would be as secure of the esteem, as he is of the partiality of this House. On the present question, it is not within the limits of possibility, that their inclination and their judgment should really go together. Now, Sir, I request the House, in observing the facts, to be attentive to the dates. I need not stop to prove that, to ascertain the quality of human actions, the date is very often an essential part of the fact. I shall state nothing, in point of fact, but what is proved and admitted. First, Till the 23d of November 1795 it appears that the Chancellor of the Exchequer adhered to the principle, which he had uniformly professed, of free and open competition, and that, until the 25th of November, he did never express an intention of departing from that principle. Second, By the evidence, on which the eleventh Resolution is founded, it appears that Mr. Boyd's supposed right to object to the negotiation of a new loan, was stated to the Chancellor of the Exchequer some time in October, and that he promised to send to Mr. Boyd and his party, to hear what they had to say, before any competition should take place, but that, at that time, *he seemed positively determined not to admit of their claim.* He never sent for Mr. Boyd. On the 23d of November he still adhered to his plan of free and open competition, and invited the competitors to meet him on the 25th, in order to bid on that princi-

ple. The House will observe that I speak of facts, as they appear on the surface of the evidence, not as I think they really were. After being reminded of his engagement to Mr. Boyd, first in a conversation, and then by a letter of the 24th of November; he says, on the 25th, that the circumstances had come, *but recently*, to his knowledge, and that he did not admit any obligation to exist. He seems to have forgotten not only his original engagement to Mr. Boyd, but the revival of it in October; and indeed, not to have been very much struck with the force of it, when it was again detailed to him on the 24th of November. Let us consider a little what this right and claim is, which appears to have made so very slight an impression on the memory and judgment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but to which at last he submits without resistance, as if he were suddenly overpowered by a torrent of conviction. In this place, Sir, it may be proper for me to premise, that whatever I say on these points is meant to be exclusively applied to the Minister. I have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Boyd, and shall always speak of him as I think, with the greatest consideration.—First of all I find, from Mr. Boyd's letter, “that the contract, for the loan of last year, was entered into under the condition, that no other public loan for this country should be made until the period fixed for the last payment of the loan then contracted for, should have elapsed.” Here the claim begins with a positive condition, which, if it could be proved, would make all general arguments superfluous. Mr. Boyd allows that it was not reduced to a specific form, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has no recollection of it. In a question of mere fact, between him and Mr. Boyd, the rather too material to be readily forgotten, I am willing to allow him the full benefit of a feeble memory. But observe what the nature and qualities of this right are, and then believe it, if you can, that a right, so founded and so qualified, should have escaped the attention of such a man as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or that when it was revived and brought back to his view, it should have made so very slight an impression on his mind. Mr. Boyd says, “it is a right founded in justice.” You may not remember an engagement; but justice, though often violated, is not quite so easily forgotten. This right is also founded in the nature of things. A curious description certainly of a claim to lend money, from a contractor to a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Or is it one of the rights of man newly imported from Paris? But it also partakes of the quality of a metaphysical right. Mr. Boyd contends, that it was *inherent and inalienable* in him as contractor; that, in that character, he could not separate himself from it.



and that, as such, his right and he were indissolubly attached to one another, and would have continued so, though he should have parted with all his share in the loan, or even tho' he never should have held any part of it, but only have acted as agent for the other contributors; and tho' he himself admits, that the contractors for the loan of 1795, could not suffer any pecuniary loss by the introduction of a new loan, otherwise than as holders of scrip. His own words are, "But I do not understand that, while I sell or 'alienate a part of the loan, I transfer any of the inalienable and 'inherent right, which belongs exclusively to me as a contractor." This to me, I confess, Sir, is a new speculation, and therefore it is possible that I may not be a proper judge of it. But this I know, that all the witnesses concur in a very different opinion, viz. that as there could be no pecuniary loss but to the holders of scrip, all the contributors to the loan of 1795 had as good a claim, as the contractors, to a preference for the succeeding loan, in proportion to the amount of the shares in the loan of 1795, then held by them respectively, and that not one of them, on that principle at least, appears to have been considered in the present loan.

But leaving this problem to shift for itself, you will find that the right, so claimed by the contractor, has been *recognised by constant practice and public opinion*. Here comes a question of fact. Has it been the *constant practice*? If it has, you have a custom without an instance. No similar case has been stated. No example has been alledged to make good the affirmative. The truth is, that there never was a precedent in point. The Governor of the Bank says, "he does not recollect any loan made for the receipts "to come out before the others were totally extinct, and that Mr. "Newland had looked back a great way, but, since the establishment of the Bank, no new loan has been made, when two payments of the preceding one were not fulfilled, as in the present "case." The asserted right of the contractor is therefore clearly not founded *on constant practice*. But it would be treating such a proposition too gently, if I contented myself with saying, that it has not been proved. There is a decisive fact on the other side of the question, which annihilates the allegation of *practice*. Allow me to state this point distinctly. The moment you understand it, you must be convinced by it. The contractors say they cannot relinquish their right, *without evident loss*. How are they to lose? As holders of scrip belonging to the former loan, *by the introduction of eighteen millions more into the market*. But if you look to the evidence, you will find there is one opinion, in which all the witnesses agree, viz, to *speak* in the terms of the fourteenth Resolu-

tion, "That the value of the existing funds is affected in a far greater degree by the *negociation* for a new loan, and the settlement of the terms thereof, than by the making the deposit on such loan after it is settled." Mr. Boyd himself expressly objects to the *negociation* of a new loan, while payments on the former loan were depending; because undoubtedly, if injury be done to the holders of scrip, it must be by the *negociation and terms*, not by the deposit. Now, Sir, supposing this to be the truth, as it certainly is, it appears by the evidence, in opposition to that *constant practice and opinion*, alledged by Mr. Boyd, that, before all the payments were completed on the loan for 1794, a new loan for 1795 was negotiated with Mr. Boyd, while considerable sums of the preceding loan were outstanding; yet the contributors to that loan did not object to such negociation, or make any complaint on account of it. You will find the fact more precisely stated in the 15th Resolution. I am not arguing now about the validity of Mr. Boyd's pretensions to a preference; but, supposing them to be good, in the sense and to the effect stated; is it possible they could be forgotten? Or, if they were not valid, why did they prevail? It would not be difficult to assign a probable motive for the Minister's conduct; but, as it would be said to amount to nothing but suspicion or conjecture, I shall leave it to every man, who observes the facts, to conclude for himself. There are still some material circumstances in this transaction, very well worthy of your attention. Mr. Boyd obtains the preference, if not, as we call it, a *gift* of the loan. What follows? *He trusts to the candour* of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and agrees to take it on *his own terms*. What precedes?—A singular fact. In the beginning of November, for the first time, the Commissioners appointed to buy up the public debt, began to make purchases in the 4 per cent. stock. The bargain for the loan was fixed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself in the 3 per cents only. That is, he did every thing, that depended on him, to lower the value of that commodity which he meant to dispose of. The 4 per cents rose of course, by this new and unexpected investment of more than half a million in ready money. Whatever that advantage amounted to, ought to have been given to the 3 per cents, in which the bargain for the loan was concluded. The learned gentleman says that, in November 1795, the purchases by the commissioners could not be made in the 3 per cent annuities; because, in that month the books of those annuities were shut. So they were in 1794. So they were in every preceding year. The times, at which the several books are shut, in all the funds respectively, never vary. Did that difficulty occur in 1794 or 1793?

Did the Commissioners ever purchase in the 4 per cents, before November last? Never. Again I say, what follows the settlement of the loan? Another fact, most singular in its appearance, most important in its effect. The Chancellor of the Exchequer makes the bargain on the 25th of November, but does not bring forward the budget till the 7th of December. On the length of that interval and its consequences, I shall observe presently. But here comes the questionable point of all. The very day after the budget, the Minister delivers a message from His Majesty, from which all men concluded, that a negotiation for peace was on foot or very likely to take place. The value of the loan immediately rose above 5 per cent, or 900,000*l.* on the capital, which we affirm was to all intents and purposes a voluntary, determined, and premeditated gift to the contractors at the expence of the public. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer should alledge that this effect of the message was not to be foreseen, or that in fact he did not foresee it, I shall leave the first of those allegations to the judgment of the House, and of the world; the second I shall not contradict. They, who take him at his word, must defend his integrity at the expence of his sagacity, on a point that could not escape the meanest understanding. In so gross a mistake, it is not possible that common sense and common honesty should have acted together. Of the effect at least, there can be no doubt. No man will deny that, if he had timed and graduated these several acts as he ought to have done, I mean the loan, the budget, and the message; the public might have had the benefit of that advance in the funds, which was produced by the message.

The 29th Resolution states, in moderate terms, that the interval of twelve days, between the settlement and the budget, is unusual, and not likely to be productive of any advantage to the Public. The fact is that, by any delay of the budget after the bargain, the Public cannot possibly gain, but may possibly lose. With respect to the contractors, the direct reverse is the case. If, in that protracted interval, political events of a favourable nature should happen, by which the price of stocks should be considerably advanced, the contractor has the whole benefit of the rise. Whereas, if the contrary should happen, whether by misfortunes abroad, or any other sinister event; and if, in consequence, the loan, instead of bearing a premium of ten or twelve per cent, should fall considerably under par, what remedy has the Public against the contractors? or would they, if they could, enforce the contract to the ruin of the parties? No, Sir, we all know that it would not be attempted. The learned gentleman admits, with

truth and candour, that Parliament, in such a case of pure misfortune, would relieve the contractor. I say they would, because they ought to do so. For reasons of this nature, it was formerly the constant rule not to conclude the bargain till the day before the budget. Even in later times, the interval has seldom exceeded two days. Supposing that, in a political view, it might have been advisable to conclude the bargain for the loan at so very early a period of the session, why did not the budget immediately follow? If otherwise, why might not the bargain have waited for the budget? On this point, one argument only has been urged, with a great deal of pomp and emphasis, namely, that it was good policy to take the earliest moment possible, after the meeting of Parliament, to exhibit to the enemy the extent of our resources, and the facility, with which the enormous capital of eighteen millions sterling could still be raised in this country. It does not yet appear that this eager exhibition of our extravagance has made any material impression on the enemy. As far as I can discover, they have not yet been much appalled by it. But, be it so. Allow the policy to be good, whether in this instance it succeeded or not. How will the right honourable gentleman answer this question? If the policy was good in November 1795, it may be so equally in November 1796. Then why have you now, for the first time, introduced into the contract for the present loan a specific stipulation, *that no payment on any new loan shall be made till after the last payment on this loan, that is, till after the 15th of December 1796?* How do you know that, before that day, it may not be indispensably necessary to raise another loan for the public service? On your own principles, you have disarmed your Government of a powerful weapon, or at least of an instrument of terror, from which, as you contend, a great effect might be expected. Let the case be ever so pressing, let the opportunity be ever so favourable, your hands are tied. You cannot resort to your own remedy without asking leave of the present contractors; that is, you must buy their consent by the gift of another loan, which they in their turn will trust to the Minister's candour, and take it on his own terms.

On the curious transaction of the Hamburgh bills, which, I believe, will furnish a clue to unravel the mysteries of the loan, I purposely restrain myself at present, an honourable gentleman near me having engaged to make it the object of a particular inquiry, as it richly deserves. One observation only is too pressing to be omitted. The learned gentleman insists on the clear and unquestionable fairness of the measure, though unusual in the mode. Now, I ask him whether, when these bills were brought into circulation, the

true nature of them was avowed? Was the discounteer informed, that the place and date were fictitious; that they were drawn in London in September, though dated from Hamburg in August? If not, the discounteer was imposed upon. I do not say that the intention was to defraud, but it certainly was to deceive him. If the truth had been declared, would any banker have risked the credit of his House by discounting such bills? It does not appear that they were ever offered to the Bank of England.

Now, Sir, I call upon the House to put together the facts, the circumstances, the consequences and pretences of the Minister's conduct in this extraordinary transaction, and, leaving out of their consideration the collusion that appears, or the motives that may be suspected, to pronounce their verdict, on the simple issue of fact, "Has he or has he not made a most improvident bargain for the Public?" If the fact be found, the moral inference is obvious and unavoidable. It need not be argued, for it cannot be resisted. Nevertheless, Sir, speaking now for myself alone, I declare that I am ready to waive every one of the objections I have stated, and even to join with his friends in a vote of acquittal, if the Minister can and will give me a fair, direct, and satisfactory answer to one remaining question. When Mellish and Morgan refused to bid on the plan of a qualified competition proposed to them on the 25th of November; for what reason did he instantly conclude with Mr. Boyd? He was not pressed for time, since Friday the 27th was the day, fixed by himself, for the final settlement. He was not pressed for money, since the first payment on the new loan, was not required before the 10th of December. For any thing that appears to the contrary, he might have taken a week, but certainly two days, without any possible inconvenience, to try at least, whether some other competitors might not offer, and by that means give the Public a possible chance of the benefit of a competition on his own plan. Then why did he not immediately send to the Bank, and desire the Governor to give public notice of the alteration, and of his being open, for a certain number of days, to receive proposals on that principle? I presume he will not say that he knew it to be such, as no man of credit would offer to bid upon. Yet what else he can say, to cover so gross and palpable a breach of his duty to the Public—I confess my imbecillity—I have taxed my imagination—but I am not able to conceive it.

The last appeal I shall make is to the prudence of the House. We are trustees for the nation, and accountable for the trust reposed in us. If we acted only for ourselves, or if the question ended with a few speeches, a short question, and a vigorous

lution, the Chancellor of the Exchequer might possibly be as safe in the opinion of his country, as he is in this House. But let it be remembered, before we decide, that the evidence is before the Public, who will compare it with the verdict and judge of us accordingly. We may acquit the Minister by a vote; but, if that vote should not appear to be warranted by the evidence, it will avail him nothing in point of reputation. The country have it in their power to try *us* as well as *him*. The Minister may escape; but, in the judgement of mankind, this House will not be acquitted.

The two following resolutions, as founded on the evidence, were proposed by Mr. Sylvester Douglas, and carried without a division.

*Resolved*, "That it appears to this House, that the terms of the loan were fixed with a due regard to the magnitude of the sums borrowed and provided for, as well as to the market price of the funds and the situation of public affairs at the time the bargain was concluded.

*Resolved*, "That it appears to this House that, in *every part* of the transaction of the late loan, the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was actuated by a view to the public interest, and that there is no ground to suppose that any interference took place on the part of any persons connected with Government in the distribution of any part of the said loan.

Mr. STEELE said, he had promised himself to confine his observations within as narrow a compass as possible, and would keep his word, though the observations of the honourable gentleman who just sat down, demanded from him more than he would otherwise have thought it necessary to say.—That honourable gentleman had entered with some censure into the constitution of the Committee, and said, that the inquiry, whether the loan was made with corrupt views, by his right honourable friend, did not properly belong to it. To this proposition the House, he was convinced, would never assent, since the principal reason for instituting the inquiry by Committee, was, that gentlemen on the other side had pointedly insinuated that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made use of the distribution of the loan as ways and means in order to secure a majority in the House—or, if not the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, at least his agents and colleagues. This, he observed, obliged all those attached by office to his right honourable friend, to feel anxiously disposed for an inquiry, and the Committee was adopted on that ground. For, the loan itself having been discussed, and the bargain sanctioned by the legislature, the only legitimate ground of inquiry that could arise, was, whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer had had any undue motives in the bargain? Although

the honourable gentleman had said, that the Resolution which incurred his disapprobation had passed during his absence, and would thereby insinuate, that it had passed in the absence of all those who looked with the same vigilance, as himself to find delinquency, where even error was not chargeable; yet he (Mr. Steele) assured the House, that the Committee was all along attended by at least two or three, and often more, of those members of the other side who were most active on the occasion. There were also other gentlemen on his side equally anxious to have the matter investigated. The Resolution of the Committee, which seemed to have given the honourable gentleman so much offence, was formed on this principle. The honourable gentleman who set this whole business in motion (Mr. Smith), was called to the chair; and, on the last day but one, stated to the Committee the necessity of not adding to the Report the lists of the subscribers to the loan; and produced a paper, containing a form of words, which stated some reasons for doing so. To this he (Mr. Steele) objected; and said, that if the matter was confined simply to that, it might, upon a future occasion, be said, that they were kept back because there was something in them that operated against the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Resolution alluded to, was therefore proposed; and, lest it might be supposed that it was carried in a thin, unattended Committee, he proposed to defer the consideration of it to the next day, in order to give the other members of the Committee full notice. And, on the succeeding day, the Committee came to the determination, in presence of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Smith).—To say then, that the Committee had no right to resolve so, was absurd and wrong. Were they to be precluded from stating the reasons why they withheld the lists? This, he said, was the true state of the subject as to the conduct of the Committee. The honourable gentleman had reduced the whole to a short question, viz. Whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer was justified in deciding in favour of Mr. Boyd? To this he would give a short answer: "That the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in doing as he did, had acted like a man of honour, with a strict regard to justice, and an anxious desire to fulfil former engagements; and with a determination, if he did err, to err on the right side. In deciding so, he had broken no statute, infringed on no rule of the House; for the House, however it might generally approve, had never made any law, that in making loans, competition was never to be departed from." His right honourable friend, and every other Chancellor of the Exchequer, had considered themselves free to act discretionally in loans, subject no doubt, to the inspection and sanction of the House. That

question then was, Whether being so free and unfettered by orders or statutes, under circumstances in which it was at least a doubt whether he was not pledged, he was not right, feeling as he did, to act as he had done? In the affirmative of this, he was sure there were few in the House who would not agree with him. There was one circumstance more which he would mention—to all other questions, answers would come much more properly from his right honourable friend. If it had been the secret determination of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give Mr. Boyd the preference, as had been alledged, would it not have been absurd for him to propose a competition so long as he had done? What end could it answer but to excite discontent and dissatisfaction? Mr. Steele declared, he was much surprised to hear gentlemen say, that Mr. Boyd was precluded from any right, if it was not specifically expressed in writing, or that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not bound, as a man of honour, to yield to his demand. If he had not done so, he would have been guilty of a gross act of injustice; an act that the very gentlemen, who now impeach him for the contrary conduct, would have reprobated with all the virulence of invective. It was obvious, he said, from the whole evidence, that Mr. Morgan not only did not expect, but was not prepared for the loan; and then, with the malignant hope of injuring or disgracing his right honourable friend, had proposed to Mr. Mellish to leave sealed proposals behind them; but Mr. Mellish scorned such a detestable contrivance, and refused his assent. Mr. Steele made some animadversions on the conduct of gentlemen on the other side, who affected not to bring any charge, but left it to others to draw inferences of crimination; and, disclaiming all hostile intentions, covertly insinuated every thing that was inimical. “I do not charge the right honourable gentleman,” said one of them (Mr. Smith) “with so clumsy a mode of corruption; but yet there is a strange coincidence between the list of subscribers to the loan, and the list of the persons who met at Grocers’ Hall.” The honourable gentleman forgetting all the while that some persons in the loan list were also in the list of those who were most active in the Common Hall against his right honourable friend’s measures.

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—“On a subject naturally so interesting to my personal feelings, as well as so important in a public view, I am anxious to address the House at a period of the debate when their attention is as little as possible exhausted. And they will forgive me when I am called upon to meet a charge of such magnitude and serious import, and which has been so diligently and ably pursued, though I might be content to rest my defence on the facts which



have been brought forward by my honourable friends, if even, at the hazard of repetition, I should advert to the points which press most closely upon my own immediate feelings. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Francis) said, that if my answer to one point was satisfactory, he would withdraw his support from the charge against me. Though in the course of what I have to say I shall not be inattentive to his question, it cannot be expected that I should narrow my defence to that point. It cannot be supposed, that from any recent declarations which have been made by the honourable gentlemen, exculpating me from all charge of personal corruption, that from any equivocal and imperfect disclaimers, retracted by artful suggestions and fresh insinuations, I should have forgotten that it was broadly stated by gentlemen on the other side, who moved for a Committee of Inquiry, that there was ground for suspicion that the distribution of the loan had been employed for the purpose of corrupt influence. They exempted me, indeed, from any charge of having regulated that distribution, from any view of sordid gain to myself; and then took the liberty to say, feeling as I did on the subject, that I was not obliged to them for the exception. If they formerly asserted, that if the inquiry was gone into, and substantiated, the result would be, to establish the actual interference of corrupt influence. If such declarations were rash and unguarded, if they were dictated by the intemperate warmth of debate, or pushed beyond all bounds of justifiable discretion, and if they are now retracted as unjust and unfounded, I certainly have reason to rejoice in the progress which has been made in consequence of the diligent and sober investigation of a Committee towards a decision so much more grateful to my character and feelings. Undoubtedly there is no charge which can be brought against the transaction of the loan, there is no error of judgement, there is no want of providence which I should not severely regret. But, at the same time, I cannot help remarking that while the ground on which the inquiry was originally brought forward, "that the loan had been employed as the means of corrupt and pernicious influence," is now professed to be abandoned; it seems to be but half retracted by the honourable mover of the Resolution, and to be supplied by ambiguous hints, and fresh insinuations. After avowing that it was his opinion, that the Committee ought to have asked for no lists, he discovers a strange coincidence between the names in the list of subscribers, and the names of a certain respectable body of merchants and bankers, assembled for a great object of political discussion; a coincidence, which could not be the effect of accident, and which could not otherwise be the effect of design, than for the purpose of

biassing their opinions, by a corrupt influence. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Francis) brings no such charge against me. His mode of acquittal is, however, rather singular.—He imputes to me no motive of corrupt influence or undue partiality. He desires me to say nothing of the transaction relative to the bills, on which however some part of the Resolutions is founded, and which has been ascribed to the motive to reward the services of an individual by the sacrifice of the public interest. But while he acquits me of any improper views of public influence, or private partiality, he at the same time says, that the advantages conferred on the contractors by the terms on which the loan has been settled, are such as must have had some undue motive, while at the same time he desires me to say nothing as to motives. I do not deny that the nature of a transaction may be such, as to afford ground for the suspicion of an undue motive, even though the motive itself may not appear on the face of the transaction. If the transaction, however, be pecuniary, there are only three motives which can be supposed to operate, personal emolument, private partiality, and public influence; and if after the most accurate investigation, strong evidence be brought to prove that none of these motives can be traced in the present transaction, I have some right to take to myself credit, that no such motives existed. The honourable gentleman who moved the Resolutions, stated, that the Committee had decided that there was no ground for suspicion of any corrupt interference; and thus, so far as their judgement went, had put their negative on that ground, on which the inquiry had originally been undertaken. The last Speaker on the other side stated, that he disliked the mode in which that Committee was constituted. It might have been supposed that a Committee, which afforded to every man, who was actuated by jealousy, suspicion, by public zeal; or if such a motive could be supposed to insinuate itself, by private pique, to state his sentiments, and to display his vigilance, was of all others the least liable to objection. It seemed, indeed, probable, in the first instance, that it would be deprived of the assistance of two honourable gentlemen (Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Grey) whose abilities and diligence none would dispute. These honourable gentlemen when it was declared that the Committee should be an open one, and that all who attended should have voices, had desired their names to be withdrawn, and seemed to consider themselves as disgraced by being put in a situation in which they should only exercise their privilege in common with every member of that House. I am happy, however, to find that these gentlemen revised their first decision, that both assisted in the Committee, and that one of them in particular dis-

tinguished himself by his active and constant attendance. It is rather singular that the decision of the Committee by which they negative all idea of corrupt interference, is the on'y one which the honourable mover conceives to be already so well recognized, that he excludes it from that string of Resolutions which he has presented as an analysis of the whole Report. Another honourable gentleman states, that he thinks on that point the Committee have no right to give an opinion. But why is that opinion expressed by the Committee? They assign it as a reason for not having given a particular detail of evidence, which by the resolution of that House they were required to give, and which they had declined to bring forward, on the ground that it was inconvenient to individuals. If, therefore, there was any objection on this point, it ought to have been stated before the Report was received, in order that it might have been recommitted. But it was a little hard that gentlemen should first receive the whole of the evidence, and then not admit the excuse for the omission of that part of the evidence which was principally exculpatory of the person whose conduct was the object of censure.

An honourable gentleman on the other side complains, that there was a want of notice of the intention to come to such a resolution in the Committee. But notice was given the day before, and I cannot admit that there was such want of attention and industry in those gentlemen on the other side, who took a principal share in the investigation, as to afford any room for such a charge. I therefore think myself entitled to assume the benefit of that opinion of the Committee, not with those qualifications, equivocations, and reserves, with which it has been fettered by the honourable mover of the Resolutions, but as a clear, full and decided testimony, that there was no distribution of the loan for the purpose of corrupt influence. As to the other charges of undue partiality to any individual for services supposed to be performed to the Government, it shortly resolves itself into the question, whether, by the mode of settling the loan, I have contrived to enrich Mr. Boyd, by a sacrifice of the public interest? I am aware it has been said that no such charge was meant to be conveyed; but why should such frequent allusions have been made to the Hamburg bills, except for that purpose? They would not have been mentioned had it not been with a view to give countenance to such a situation. I shall not now fully enter into the nature of that transaction, as an opportunity will so soon be presented, when it will be brought forward as an object of separate inquiry; I will only shortly state the substance. In every loan bill Parliament inserts a premium for the

prompt payment of the sums subscribed, foreseeing that Government may possibly have occasion for the money before the instalments become due in the regular course. Last year, though large sums were paid up, still the public exigences were such as to render additional supplies necessary, and the terms offered were not sufficiently tempting to induce individuals to come forward with their money. Under these circumstances Government entered into a negotiation with a monied house to advance such sums as were wanted for the service. At that time Parliament could not be convened, and in order to give effect to the negotiation, it was indispensibly necessary that it should be accompanied with some degree of secrecy. In the whole transaction, however, there was nothing questionable or suspicious, nothing unwarrantable on the part of Government, or which gave to Mr. Boyd an exclusive right, far less a discretionary power, to dictate the terms of a future loan. So much for the substance of the transaction; as for the form, it was only the form of the security. It was only an engagement on the part of Government, to make good the sums advanced for the public service. Whether it was executed on stamp or common paper, added nothing to the validity of the security. The particular manner of executing it, was such as was dictated by the necessary regard to secrecy. As to the case of a merchant, in whom it was affirmed such a transaction would be highly discreditable and suspicious, there was nothing in common between the conduct of a merchant in the management of his private affairs, and that of a Government acting from the pressure of public exigencies. It might reasonably be suspected, that a merchant resorted to such a mode of transacting business, in order to supply the deficiency of his capital, and to support a fictitious credit. In the case of Government, the sums were already voted, they were only wanted for immediate service, and funds were provided to reimburse those, who advanced them as soon as their claims became due. But was this a service of such magnitude and importance, as to be conceived to give Mr. Boyd such strong claims upon Government? I confess it was executed with the same liberality and zeal as every other service, which he has undertaken. But it is supposed that in order to reward Mr. Boyd, the most likely method which I could devise, was to bestow upon him a loan of such considerable extent, in which he only is a holder among others. Is it probable, that in order to reward him individually, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at a time of severe pressure, and when under the necessity of making such large demands from the House, should add 8 or 10 per cent. to the public burdens of the year? With respect to the evidence before the

Committee, it is a principle in human nature, that where persons give evidence in a case which involves their own interest and merits, their judgement will imperceptibly and involuntarily be biased to one side of the question; and all such evidence requires to be weighed with the most scrupulous attention, and to be received with some qualification.—I am sure I say nothing offensive when I apply this principle equally to Mr. Boyd and to Mr. Morgan. How far the share he had in the transaction of the Hamburgh bills had any influence on the disposition of the loan, appears from the testimony of Mr. Boyd. He declares that he formed no claim from that circumstance, that he had not the smallest expectation of any preference, nor did he conceive that such an idea existed. And it is to be remarked, that his evidence is consistent with itself, and uncontradicted by the testimony of others. The evidence of Mr. Morgan stands in a very different predicament. After stating that the Governor of the Bank had warned him of something, which was likely to secure to Mr. Boyd a preference in the loan, he had, upon being questioned more particularly, affirmed, that he had not mentioned what that something was. But that afterwards he said, that the Governor of the Bank described the transaction of the Hamburgh bills, as likely to secure a preference to Mr. Boyd. So much for Mr. Morgan contradicting himself. The Governor of the Bank, upon being examined, expressly stated, that he had not mentioned a syllable about the bills, that he only said, that Mr. Boyd had a claim from the loan of last year, which he conceived him to be too sagacious to allow to escape him. If I had determined to avail myself of any opportunity to throw the loan, at all events, into the hands of Mr. Boyd, could I not have found some better mode of achieving my purpose, than that which I pursued? Would I have held out the system of competition? Would I have deliberately announced my intention for that purpose, and have invited competitors, when I was aware that the result could tend only to beget animosity and disappointment? Would I have expressed any reluctance to the claims of Mr. Boyd in the first instance, and yielded to them only upon the conviction that they were well founded? If nothing was got by the intention which I at first announced of a free competition, but increasing difficulty, and accumulated embarrassment, as to the mode in which the bargain was ultimately settled, is not this internal evidence better than any parole proof that can be adduced, that I was completely sincere in the month of October, when I first announced that intention, and that I had formed no determination to benefit Mr. Boyd at any rate, by giving him a preference? I had not then, said the Chancellor of the Exchequer,

examined his claim, because it had not then been stated to me so distinctly, and because it had not been brought to my remembrance by the Governor of the Bank. If, then, I was under the influence of error, it was because I carried the system of competition strong in my mind, and because looking solely to that, I neglected in the first instance to attend to the claims of Mr. Boyd. As to the injury which Mr. Morgan and his friends may have suffered, from having prepared their money in order to bid, that surely cannot be seriously insisted on, while it is recollected that the final adjustment of every loan is matter of so much uncertainty, and connected with so many collateral considerations.

No communication from the Bank, as to competition, ever took place, except with respect to Mr. Boyd. How could Mr. Morgan contend that he had sustained injury from having prepared his property to qualify himself to be a bidder, when he stated, that till the 23d of November, he never began to doubt that there would be no competition at all? It has been proved, that as to the claim of Mr. Boyd, I at first testified strong prejudices and great reluctance, which were not overcome till it was brought forward in a shape in which it was no longer controvertible; that I admitted the principle of competition, and receded from it only when fair and just grounds were adduced on the part of an individual to warrant a deviation from the general system. Here a great deal of minute criticism has been displayed by gentlemen on the other side, with respect to Mr. Boyd's letter. I was then in the situation of a Judge, trying a cause between Mr. Boyd and the Public; was the consideration of the manner in which his cause was urged, to have any influence on my mind in the decision on the justice of his claims? I now stand here accused. It has been said, that I was bound to pay no attention to the claims of Mr. Boyd for a preference, because there was no express agreement, no specific engagement for that purpose. But might there not be some common understanding, some implied condition, some strong and clear construction, equally binding to the observance of the claim in point of honour and justice? Had there been an express agreement, it would have unquestionably been present to my recollection; but this was no reason why an explanation properly understood, and clearly made out, should not receive its due degree of attention. In a conversation respecting a loan, a good deal of discussion naturally takes place, some particulars of which are committed to memorandums, and others suffered to pass more loosely. In the loan of 1795, it was proposed by the contractors that there should be no payment on any new loan till February of the succeeding year, to which I readily assented, not con-

ceiving that the exigencies of the public service would require any money to be advanced before that period. Of this promise I was reminded by the Governor of the Bank of England, and I was the more confirmed in its propriety, as I found that no new loan had taken place in such circumstances, even where no assurance previously had been given. The Chancellor of the Exchequer then noticed the connection in which contractors stood to Government, distinct from the scrip-holders, and which gave to them particular claims. Contractors had, in the first instance, to treat with Ministers, and were immediately responsible for the fulfilment of the term. Government neither could ascertain, nor had any thing to do with the scrip holders; they had no claim—were under no engagement; the contractors were. As to that part of the resolutions which censured the terms of the loan, it was easy for ingenious men to connect or confound facts by stating some that were true, and omitting others that were equally true, so to make their reasoning upon them apply to the particular purpose for which they were thus drawn up. In this place he would say, that his greatest objections to the resolutions were, that in them the honourable gentleman had contrived to put together a collection of truths, in such a manner as to convey all the malignity and venom of falsehood. He adverted to the term open and free competition, from which he was said to have departed, and remarked, that in order to secure the interests of the Public, and prevent the manœuvres of designing persons, every competition must, to a certain degree, be qualified—at least by the consideration how far the parties were competent to fulfil their bargain. He never meant any but a system of qualified competition; and from this it was not true, as stated in the resolution, that he had made a total departure. He then justified the propriety of his own conduct, in not having left himself at the mercy of Boyd and Co. but when the qualified competition which he held out was declined by the others, in having taken such precautions as still enabled him to name his own terms. But he was asked, why did he not send the loan back again into the city? What, after it had been rejected by two sets of gentlemen, and when it would come in the less inviting shape of qualified competition? When the most favourable terms could only bring forward three parties, was it probable that the less favourable terms would produce more? When a day was fixed for conversation on the loan, it was necessary that some interval should take place, that the parties might deliberate on the terms; when all was finally arranged, he saw no good that could possibly arise from a delay of forty-eight hours, a period of suspense and uncertainty of which advantage might be taken.

occasion fluctuations in the public funds, one circumstance that made him determined not to let the contractor leave his house till the bargain was closed. He accounted for the delay which took place between the time the bargain was made, and its being intimated to the House, by his being disappointed in bringing on the budget, as he first intended, on the 2d December. It was well known to the House, the pressure and importance of the public business which then was in daily agitation, and totally precluded him from making the necessary arrangements for the budget. He defended the manner in which he had exercised his discretion in making the terms; and having described the state of the country, though by no means so impoverished and exhausted as opposition would represent it, he thought credit was due to those efforts by which Government had been able to contract for so large a loan in the fourth year of the war, upon even better terms than had been gotten in former years; which he exemplified by a comparison of this with the last year's loan, which was sanctioned by Parliament without a single objection; and would leave it to the House to decide whether, in the present instance, he most deserved their censure or approbation. The next point was the effect of the King's message; those who knew him best, knew that it was not in his mind when the bargain was made. But if he had foreseen it, he could not have foreseen the rise that took place in the stocks. He was no party to any such fraud; but to whatever cause that temporary rise was to be ascribed, it certainly was not produced by the message only. Whatever ideas of peace or negotiation, people who wished for it might entertain, there was nothing more in the message, than a declaration that the time was arrived, to which His Majesty had alluded in his speech to Parliament. Any one who carried its meaning farther, was either too sanguine in expectation, or intended to raise hopes which could not be realized. Besides the message, there were other collateral causes for the sudden rise of the stocks—the unexpected victories of the Austrians, the increasing distresses of the enemy, the serene and tranquil appearance of affairs at home, compared with that cloudy and turbulent aspect which they bore during the period when the terms of the loan were originally settled (the discussion of the two bills). All these causes, coupled with the intimation, that peace only depended on the disposition of the enemy, combined to give that sudden and extraordinary rise to the funds, which singly they would have failed to produce. After all, the extent of the benefit to the contractors, and of the loss to the Public, had been greatly over-rated. An exaggerated statement of figures had been brought forward in order to be echoed through the country. It had



been stated, that the profit upon the loan amounted to 12 per cent. It amounted to this sum only for four days, during which, stocks were exceedingly fluctuating; so that altogether it did not bear this price for above a few hours. So that in order to make out this profit, all the shares must have been disposed of within these few hours, a circumstance which would have brought such a quantity into market, as must have occasioned a depression, that would greatly have overbalanced the temporary rise. All the profit is stated to center in the individual contractors, and all the concurring and unforeseen causes, which operated to give so favourable a turn to the terms of the loan, to have been the result of my premeditation. Under these circumstances, I am said to have given away a sum of two millions one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, by the mode of negotiating the present loan. With this assertion concludes the charge against me; and with desiring the House to attend to this assertion, I conclude my defence!

Mr. FOX said, that exclusive of the importance of the subject now before the House, he must, from the evidence before him, vote for the original proposition of his honourable friend, and against the amendment which had been proposed; for that amendment alleged for a fact that which was not true, and among the reasons which he had for the vote which he should give, was that of some expressions of the learned gentleman who proposed the amendment, and also those of the Minister himself, who had held pretty lofty language upon this occasion. He had said they had inferred guilt where there was no evidence of it, and that they made insinuations which they half retracted. He thought he knew his duty too well ever to make any insinuation of guilt, where there was no suspicion. It was wholly against his nature to make that sort of attack on any man, to pretend to say there might be guilt, when he thought there was none; nor should he ever be backward in stating it where he had suspicions. But with regard to the guilt, as it appeared to him in this case, he would state it to the House, as well, as what he conceived to be the nature of the accusation. The Minister had stated that the accusation originally made against him upon this subject was, that he held a negotiation in the concluding of the bargain for the loan, that was to be used for the purposes of corruption, and that it might be made use of to influence the Members of the House to vote for him. This was incorrect—no such accusation was ever made against that right honourable gentleman. The original mover of the resolutions now before the House had never imputed that to the Minister. He always had acquitted him of personal corruption; and for this he (Mr. Pitt) said, that he did

thank him. I care not, said Mr. Fox ; I claim not his thanks, nor shall I ever complain that I do not receive them. But I accused him then, and I accuse him now, of having made an improvident bargain for the Public. Even improvidence, in a Minister of Finance, Mr. Fox contended to be no small crime ; and he could not help saying he was surprised to hear that sort of improvidence stated as a mere peccadillo. What ! Improvidence to the vast extent of this loan in the subject of finance, by a Minister of Finance, a mere peccadillo ! It was not so to be called ; it was a very serious charge against a Minister of this country to say that he had in a transaction of this vast importance made an improvident bargain. The bargain was not improvident merely, but it was made under such suspicious circumstances, as the House ought not to be too ready to excuse ; but he must protest against the doctrine that no bad motive should be assigned to the Minister, if it could not be proved what that motive was. This was against the common order of things, which he conceived in the present instance entitled him to say that the motive, be it what it may, cannot be a good one where the effect is so bad, and the circumstances so suspicious. The right honourable gentleman had insisted that he was totally exculpated from all attempts to influence, by this loan, the votes of the Members of the House ; he dared to say that this was true, for he did not see in the present state of the politics of this country, that the right honourable gentleman had any occasion to increase his majority in that House, and therefore, if this loan was made a subject of influence, it must be influence of another kind. The right honourable gentleman, as well as the learned gentleman who opened the debate, had insisted much that the merchants in the city, who were subscribers to this loan, were not concerned in any way of direct influence ; but that was was not the charge which he made against the Minister. If there was any species of improvidence which it was proper in the House to check rather than another, it was that species which went, not to affix political weakness and political disgrace on the character of the Minister, but which tended to procure for him, from great and powerful men, great and powerful support. In the present case, the loan was diffused among a class of men, from whom the Minister, even supposing him innocent of any corrupt intention, might derive much more solid advantage than from a few votes in the House of Commons. The first point in the business to which he would call the attention of the House, was the mode of transacting the loan. The right honourable gentleman had all along been an advocate for free and open competition. He begged leave to dismiss all cavil upon the expression " free and open

competition," he meant it in the fair and candid sense. But how stood the matter in point of fact with regard to the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? In 1793, he brought before the House a bargain so extravagant and wasteful to the Public, that he attempted to defend it only by stating, it had been the result of a free and open competition. This proved how much merit the Minister thought there was in free and open competition, since he rested his defence in a case so desperate wholly on that circumstance.—Why then, he could not help suspecting the fairness of that loan, in which the Minister abandoned that mode, and that too in a loan as extensive and extravagant as any we had ever heard of. This loan, therefore, was as extravagant in point of terms, and more objectionable in point of manner, than the loan of 1793; and here he must make an observation, that the right honourable gentleman's exceptions were greater than his rules. For it was not true that he had in substance followed the principle of public competition in loans; particularly if we looked to quantity instead of number of loans. The last two loans were not made by competition, and in point of quantity they nearly equalled all the others put together—amounting to pretty near fifty millions. The Minister, therefore, had abandoned the practice, which he extolled in theory, of public competition; fifty millions had been added to the capital of our debt, and that without a competition in the bidding for the loans. He wanted to know whether, according to the principles of common sense, he was not called upon to say that this loan was an improvident bargain, at least on the part of the Public? and he would ask the House whether such a man should pass uncensured, merely because it could not be proved what his motives are? Here Mr. Fox proceeded to take notice of the evidence as printed in the Report, and to comment on the various circumstances of that evidence, by which he inferred that a preference was really intended by the Minister to be given to Mr. Boyd at all events. It was extremely material to the honour of his character, fairly to tell when he had the first notice of Mr. Boyd's claims. He had pressed him often for an answer to this question, and never had obtained any specific reply. On this point he thought Mr. Boyd's evidence inconsistent with the right honourable gentleman's declaration. Mr. Boyd said positively, on his examination, that as early as October he preferred his claim to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer being convinced of its justice, came under promise to give him the preference. He was willing to make every allowance for omissions amid the multiplicity of business with which the attention of the right honourable gentleman must neces-

farly be distracted, but to forget such an important subject as this, admitted neither palliation nor excuse. Was it nothing, after having come under a positive promise to prefer an individual, to give notice to the Governor of the Bank of his intention to hold out proposals of public competition, in which he knew at the time it would not be in his power to persevere, and which, in fact, he had been obliged to abandon? Here he would say something upon the claim of Mr. Boyd. If the claim was invalid, it would only vary the degree of guilt; and if it was valid, it was a singular circumstance that it should have been entirely forgotten. It certainly was not a claim founded upon a direct written or verbal agreement: but even though the claim was good, it was not sufficient to stand between him and the Public; and though gentlemen were extremely fond of appealing to the Governor of the Bank, the evidence that he gave before the Committee went directly to invalidate his claim. The opinion of Mr. Giles was fortified by fact and justice. For supposing, which he really believed was the case, that it would have been better for the nation to have given the contractors a pecuniary compensation. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or if the country were bound to the contractors, they were bound to the contributors; and if such a compensation had been granted, it would have been but fair that its advantages should have been extended to the contributors, as well as to the contractors. Supposing, for instance, that 3 or 400,000*l.* had been voted to Mr. Boyd and his friends for the loss they sustained, the House would certainly have provided that the compensation should extend to all the subscribers as well as to the contractors; for how the country could be bound to the contractor and not to the contributor, he was at a loss to conceive. It was said that these come under some degree of risk. But how long does it exist? Only till the deposit is made. What is the nature of the risk? A risk may be so much that it may be nothing at all. The contractor may sometimes be obliged to hold scrip for a considerable time; but so is the contributor, and the risk on his part was only less, as the contractor has commonly a greater share than the contributor. In justice, or the nature of things then, there was certainly nothing to authorize the claim. There has been many a loan bargained for in this country; but there have not been a sufficient number of instances to constitute a custom on this head.

Much stress had been laid upon conversation which took place between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Boyd, in 1794. It seems the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to hasten the payment of the loan, said, that the following February would be too late for the last instalment, because it might be necessary to re-

negotiate a new loan before that time.—This expression of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was represented as a virtual recognizance of the claim of Mr. Boyd. But it was not necessary to ascribe this conversation to a tenderness for Mr. Boyd's right, when it was much more natural to suppose it proceeded from a concern for the public interest. This casual expression, however, had such an effect upon the mind of the right honourable gentleman, that he cannot efface the idea of Mr. Boyd's peremptory right to shut the market against new loans, till the last instalment upon the preceding loan shall have been paid. To all this the right honourable gentleman asked, have I shewn any symptoms of partiality to Mr. Boyd? On the contrary, was it not with the greatest reluctance that I deserted my favourite system, in order to satisfy his claim? We have seen reluctance (said Mr. Fox) often used as a veil under which we conceal the commission of acts which we ought not to have committed. "With what sweet, reluctant, amorous delay," the right honourable gentleman took leave of his professions I know not. Still, however, he maintained that he kept up some degree of competition. But if he was aware that it was such a competition as to excite contempt, Mr. Fox could give it no other character than that of a miserable expedient, to cover his determination; and if he had a better opinion of it, why did he abandon it on the opinion of two angry men?—But here occurs a question of moment, respecting the time at which the loan was made. On account of some pressing business in the House of Commons, he could not bring on the budget, but yet he could not put off the loan, but concluded the bargain twelve days before he notified it to Parliament; whereas on former occasions, it used only to be concluded one, two, or three days before the opening of the budget. From the circumstances of the loan, he proceeded to speak of the motives which actuated the negotiation. And if it was not allowed to operate as an instrument of corruption, it certainly had some reference to a transaction which took place in September, in which Mr. Boyd raised 2,500,000*l.* to Government, upon Treasury bills, bearing a fictitious date at Hamburg. This transaction Mr. Fox reprobated, on the authority of the Governor of the Bank of England, as extremely discreditable to Government, and as disgraceful to those who set it on foot. When he saw the right honourable gentleman abandon his principles—when he saw him abandon them at the suit of an individual—and when he saw him abandon them in favour of this individual; after being engaged in a discreditable transaction with him, the observation could not but excite some suspicions, and it would require stronger defensive reasoning than any that he had adduced to establish his in-

nocence. But, says he, this was only a necessary supply, which Mr. Boyd advanced in the most liberal manner for the service of the country, in a time of difficulty, when her resources were exhausted, and when it would have been exceedingly inconvenient to have convened Parliament. This representation served only to enhance the favour conferred by Mr. Boyd, and to establish the relation between that transaction and the negotiation of the present loan; for to relieve the Minister from such difficulties as those, and in which he had involved himself by improvidence or extravagance, was an obligation which would naturally in these circumstances be too highly valued to be easily forgotten. He might have negotiated a short loan in September, which would have operated as a present supply till after the holidays; but this could not have been explained to France, nor would it have given that power half the idea of our financial superiority which she must necessarily have formed from such a highly-creditable transaction, as raising money by means of fictitious Hamburg bills! Mr. Fox next defended Mr. Morgan, in persevering as a candidate for the loan, upon the principle that he was exceedingly desirous of getting, and that he was determined to offer more favourable terms to the public than any other monied man would give. There still remained the important subject of the message; and first of all, there was a dispute about the fact, whether or not all the rise in the price of stock was occasioned by the message. The right honourable gentleman contended, that the news of the Austrian victories had a considerable share in promoting the rise. But these victories were pretty generally known before the 25th of November. The rapid decay of the French finances was assigned as another cause of this political phenomenon. But he begged to know, if after the 25th of November, the French finances had decayed so rapidly, that even the most sanguine calculator found his calculations far short of the truth. He was the more surprised at hearing this language, when he recollected that about eight months ago they were described as being in the agonies of death, in the very gulph of bankruptcy. When the right honourable gentleman was obliged to have recourse to such pretexts, in his opinion no accuser could say more against him. He was asked, how he came to calculate upon the average rise of stock, and of course the average premium on the loan from the temporary effect of any particular news? He replied, that he calculated upon the price of stock, when subscribers made their first deposit, at which period the omnium afforded a clear profit of twelve and a half per cent.—He admitted, for argument's sake, that the message might be the natural effect of the Minister's comment on the King's speech at the

opening of the session ; but who did not know that a formal message from the throne carried much greater weight with it than an occasional speech of a Minister in Parliament ? The fall of stock was not to be wondered at, because the public had never seen the message acted upon, and therefore it was but natural that the funds should sink to their former level. Mr. Fox next adverted to the conduct of the Commissioners appointed to manage the funds for the liquidation of the national debt, in buying into the four, instead of the three per cents, and concluded with shewing, that the terms of the loan were much more extravagant, not than the country had paid at some former times, but in comparison with the terms which might now have been obtained, by free and open competition. He sat down, giving it as his opinion, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been guilty of a breach of duty, on which ground he gave his assent to the original resolutions.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that oppressed as he was by a severe cold, he should not have intruded upon the patience of the House, but for something which was said in the course of the debate by the honourable and learned gentleman who moved the amendment ; his expressions were so pointedly directed to him that he could not sit totally silent, although he was hardly able to speak. The honourable gentleman in authoritative phrase declared, that he gave him (Mr. Sheridan), an opportunity of retracting what he had said on a former occasion. He was always ready to retract any thing spoken wrongfully or unadvisedly ; but he congratulated himself that he preserved consistency in his declarations ; he was not in the habit of retracting like gentlemen opposite to him ; nor did he find the necessity for so doing. Some gentlemen had, indeed, retracted their former principles and opinions. Whether it were from avarice or ambition, he could not tell ; but these gentlemen were in the habit of striking a balance between their Interest and their professions ; they were in the habit, therefore, of accommodating as well as retracting. It was from a speech of his, the printed copy of which he saw in the hands of gentlemen at the other side, that all the clamour had arisen of aspersions cast on the purity and integrity of the Minister. He had certainly intimated, that some *rouleaus* of this immense profit had found their way into that House. The fact was certain. It had been admitted by the Lord Mayor, who had obligingly corrected him as to the amount of his share. He had erroneously stated it at two millions. It was by the receiver's declaration, 2,800,000*l*. There was no possibility of doubt, but that some of this oil of influence had been sent to grease that squeaking wheel in the city, called the mercantile interest ! Every method

had been taken, to draw the attention of the House in this instance from the main question. No corruption had been suggested by Mr. Smith. The right honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer had come with a boast of honourable acquittal by the Committee, and had said that gentlemen at his side of the House attended it ;—it was true, they had so. His honourable friend (Mr. Grey) and himself, had gone there ; for his part he never went after the first day, nor did the Report contain his sentiments. The gentlemen at his side of the House wanted a Committee of the whole House, in order that the witnesses might be examined before the world, or else a Select Committee, composed of equal numbers from each side of the House. Either of these would have been a fair mode of proceeding, and have shown a disposition to impartial investigation ; but in the Committee which pondered on that mighty loan, the opposition had not the honours of the sitting as active citizens. A Committee was appointed, in which the accused parties became the judges of their principal. The First Lord of the Treasury was tried by his Secretary, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer by half a paymaster ! He was in a worse state even than an acquitted felon. He was tried by a band of placemen, and had been acquitted only by his accomplices ! The right honourable gentleman in granting the Committee, seemed to be wounded in pride and spirit. The attempt to institute an inquiry was a tax upon his purity ; suspicion touched him in the pinching part, and he reluctantly complied. If the right honourable gentleman would recollect, that in the year 1783, he wanted an inquiry into the circumstances of the loan made by Lord John Cavendish, for winding up the expences of the American war, delicacy would not perhaps be so much offended at the inquiry now made ; particularly, if he considered how much worse the present loan was for the public in its terms, and in the manner of its negociation. The circumstance of the Hamburg bills was degrading to the dignity of a great nation ; it proved that the Government was reduced to their last shift ; it was a matter of despicable accommodation, which shrunk from the light. The bills were illegal, they were intrinsically worth nothing, for they were drawn by nobody ; and constituted a bankruptcy against the Government which issued them. How strange that the right honourable gentleman should support his domineering pretensions in the war against France, by arguments drawn from the ruin of the enemy's finances, they being, as he expressed it, in the gulf of national bankruptcy, when he himself was caught and wheeling in its vortex. Mr. Sheridan concluded by declaring, that he would vote for the Resolutions of his honourable friend.



The **SPEAKER** having stated the first Resolution moved by Mr. Smith, the House divided on Mr. Douglas's amendment to it.

For it - - 171

Against it - 23

Majority - —148

All the other Resolutions of Mr. Smith were negatived by the previous question, without a division.

#### LIST OF THE MINORITY,

On Mr. Smith's motions respecting the Loan.

Aubrey, Sir John  
Barclay, George, Esq.  
Burch, J. R. Esq.  
Courtenay, John, Esq.  
Crespigny, T. C.  
Fletcher, Sir H.  
Fox, Right Hon. C. J.  
Francis, Philip, Esq.  
Grey, Charles, Esq.  
Howard, Henry, Esq.  
Hussey, William, Esq.  
Jervoise, J. C.

Lechmere, Edward, Esq.  
M'Leod, General  
Milner, Sir William  
North, Dudley, Esq.  
Robinson, Marcus  
Ruffell, Lord William  
Ruffell, Lord John  
Sheridan, R. B. Esq.  
Spencer, Lord Robert  
Sturt, Charles  
Tarleton, General

#### TELLERS.

Smith, William, Esq.

Jekyll, Joseph, Esq.

*Monday, 29th February.*

Sir **GEORGE SHUKBURGH EVELYN** moved for leave to present a petition from the administrators and executors of the late Dr. John Hunter, for leave to bring in a petition for the House to determine whether it would purchase the museum of the late Dr. John Hunter? that in case it should decline to do so it might otherwise be speedily disposed of.

Mr. **CURWEN** objected to bringing up this petition, because he could not suffer any increase of the public burdens, however trivial, at a time when the greater part of the community, as well as many persons of small fortunes, were scarcely able to support the taxes imposed upon them, and heightened by an oppressive and calamitous war. Another reason for his objection was, that this museum was not open for public inspection, and consequently ought not to be made a general charge.

Mr. **ISAAC HAWKINS BROWNE** observed, that as it was not intended to make the purchase of this museum a burden this session, whatever the determination of the Committee might be to whom the petition should be referred, and as it was optional in the next, he did not perceive any clear ground for objection. The

late Dr. John Hunter, with great scientific knowledge, unceasing perseverance, and an expence of 20,000*l.* at least, had made an useful and curious collection, which, by his will, he wished to be preserved unimpaired, and accordingly requested that a proposal should first be made to the Government of this country to purchase it, at such a price as should appear reasonable to both parties; and if this proposal was refused, an offer was then to be made to any foreign Government, and afterwards to any private individual. He had himself often seen the collection, as he doubted not many other gentlemen in the House, of more science than himself, had done, and so far as he was able to give his opinion upon it, he pronounced it an object of national ornament, and of great national utility, whether he considered it in a systematic, general, or particular point of view. The whole purport of the present petition was for a Committee to inquire whether this collection should be suffered to go out of the kingdom or not? And it did not at present extend so far as to solicit the actual purchase. But the honourable gentleman opposite had stated that it was not open to public inspection. Of this he was not able to speak at present; but he knew that in the late Dr. Hunter's time it was always open to public inspection, and he believed that since his death it had always been made use of for public lectures. He understood that means had been pointed out for its purchase, which would be extremely beneficial, and he therefore hoped that the period was not yet arrived, when, because we may be compelled to cease to be "generous," we must also cease to be "just." The House would be able to judge better upon the report of the Committee, and he therefore wished no farther objection at present to be made.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG, as a friend to literature and science, wished the petition to be brought up. He thought the House could not with propriety reject the petition of the executors and administrators of the late Surgeon-General of the army, especially upon a subject which, after the labour and experience of his life, was proved to have tended so beneficially to relieve the subjects of this realm. The question upon which the House was now to decide was, whether this museum should be disposed of to our own or to a foreign country? That in case the former proposition was made, there might be some grounds for the executors at a future date to lay in a claim. This decision must depend upon the examination of evidence from the first medical and chirurgical characters, and that some progress might be made towards that examination, which would fully ascertain the utility of reserving this collection, he hoped the petition would be accepted.

Mr. FRANCIS wished to know if any price was fixed, and if not, how it could be estimated?

Mr. HUSSEY did not controvert the utility of this collection; but objected upon the same principles as his honourable friend (Mr. Curwen.) He understood from the last gentleman that spoke but one, that the object of the petition was not to purchase the museum in the present session, but merely to lay the ground for a future claim. That was, as he understood it, that the House should thereby pledge itself to the purchase; but as nothing farther was intended to be done this session, he saw no reason why the whole should not be put off to the next.

Mr. COURTENAY said, that if the question had the least resemblance of jobbing, he would vote against it, but it was well known that the late Dr. J. Hunter was distinguished all over the world for his vast researches and great professional skill, and that he had expended a large fortune for the improvement of his scientific pursuits to the honour of the nation, though at the same time to the disadvantage of his family. Now he never had met with any thing more unexceptionable than the prayer of the present petition, which was merely to ensure the expectations of a family, at present, perhaps, subjected to some temporary inconvenience from the liberality of the late Dr. J. Hunter, and the indecisive situation of their property. The museum was not only remarkable for every thing curious, but every thing scientific and serviceable to mankind; and as the House of Commons was not only the guardian of the public, but the rewarder of private merit, he thought the petition ought not to be rejected.

The petition was brought up and read.—It stated, that as the executors were not apprised of the notice which the House had given, not to receive private petitions after a certain day, in time to prepare the petition for a Committee, to examine the utility of the late Dr. John Hunter's museum, they petitioned the House to indulge them, by giving leave for that petition now to be brought in.

Leave was given, and the petition was brought in and read, when upon the question being put for referring it to a Committee,

Mr. HUSSEY wished to know why it could not be delayed till next session?

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG informed him that the nature of this petition differed from a petition for an inclosure bill, inasmuch as it required the slow and deliberate examination of professional individuals to decide upon particular parts of the museum, while it required the opinion of scientific men in general to decide upon the

national utility of the whole. He therefore hoped that the preliminary, or ground work of the proceedings, which was the formation of a Committee, upon whose report the House would afterwards be left at liberty to purchase it or not, would not be delayed.

Mr. CURWEN said that nothing which he had heard could convince him of the necessity of urging the measure at this period. It was to be purchased, however, he wished it to be open to the inspection of all persons, and at all times; and he also wished to have the whole amount of the purchase immediately brought forward with the other public accounts, that every thing may be provided for at once, and that the people might have some general idea of their condition before we proceeded farther in the calamitous way in which we have been so long and unfortunately engaged.

The petition was referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. JEKYLL rose to make the motion, of which he had given notice on a former evening. If ever there was a period which, in a more particular manner, demanded a strong constitutional jealousy over the measures of Government, it was the period at which he had now the honour to address the House. It was a period with calamity and distress, a period when their constituents, pressed by every species of extravagance, were groaning under a load of insupportable burdens, the pressure of which was aggravated by the horror of an impending famine.—The enormous and unexampled profusion which had been manifested in the conduct of the war, he was happy to hear, was about to be submitted to the House on a future day. But it was their duty to inquire, not only into the extent, but the mode of the expenditure; to the manner in which the money was raised, as well as to the uses to which the sums were applied. With this view he submitted the motion which he had now the honour to make, to the impartial consideration of the House. It was founded upon part of the Report of the Committee upon the negotiation of the loan, and it implied a charge against the Chancellor of the Exchequer, no less than of acting in a fraudulent and dishonourable manner in his public capacity; of having brought the acceptance of His Majesty's Treasury into disgrace, and of having laid the foundation for future frauds and collusion in the public money transactions of Government. The manner in which the right honourable gentleman defended the circumstances of the transaction, did not reflect much credit upon the share he had in the negotiation. Whenever he had been attacked upon the score, an intemperate warmth had animated his replies: and he had been too long a witness of his public conduct, not to have observed, that in proportion as his cause

weak, his language was strong ; and that vehemence of manner had constantly accompanied his political malversations. If however, he had not positive proofs of delinquency, he would not have advanced the charge. It was not the object of inquiry, how the right honourable gentleman, liberally furnished as he was for carrying on the services of the year, had launched forth on such an unbounded scale of extravagance as to need farther supplies by the month of September, and to be so much pressed as to be under the necessity of having recourse to anticipation. Nor was it the question of present discussion how he came to be on such terms with the Bank of England, as not to be able to raise from it the supplies which he wanted. From whatever reason he applied for relief to Mr. Boyd, Mr. Boyd consented to grant the relief required ; in his own words, "in the least uncommon mode." Secrecy was deemed necessary to cover the transaction, with a view to stamp it throughout with the badge of fraud. "The transaction," said Mr. Boyd, "was as regular as the circumstances of the case, and all the views, would admit." The language was general and vague ; borrowed, no doubt from existing circumstances, of which they had heard so often in debate on other subjects. Mr. Boyd said, that though he obliged the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by doing what the Bank of England would not do, he had no expectation of receiving any favour in his turn from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This, however, happened not to be the opinion of Mr. Giles, the Governor of the Bank, or Messrs. Morgan and Mellish ; or they all agreed in entertaining a suspicion, that Mr. Boyd, from this transaction, would be preferred in the negotiation of the late loan, so far even as to exclude any hope of success, on fair and reasonable terms, from the other competitors. They were also unanimous in opinion, that the transaction itself would have been highly discreditable to any mercantile House. To this it was answered, that Government is not in the situation of a private trader. If he understood any thing of the qualities which ought to constitute the character of a Government, they were neatness, delicacy, and honour ; and if any of these qualities appeared in the present transaction, he had lost all discernment between right and wrong. Another feature was, that the bills were unstamped. He believed that it would be admitted that there was no transaction which might not be vitiated by fraud. What then would have been the fate of these bills had they been sued in a court of law, against the drawer, the indorser or the acceptor ?—The bills would have been found invalid, and the plaintiff would have been nonsuited. In addition to this, when the bills came to be negotiated, if it was

asked where they were drawn ; not at Hamburgh, but in London where they were to be paid ; not into the Bank of England, to the Paymaster General of His Majesty's forces, at the order of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury. Mr. Jekyll here observed that the act of the 23d of His present Majesty might be re-entitled, An act for the better regulating the office of the Paymaster General of the forces, which, to prevent all embezzlement of public money, provides that all sums drawn by him shall be issued at the Bank. Whereas the first of the present bills, directly contrary to that act, was paid by the drawer, without the immediate check of the Bank, directly into the hands of the Paymaster-General of the forces. The usual course of the Bank would have been too circuitous ; besides that, the right honourable gentleman, reasons into which it was needless to inquire, was not in the humour with the Bank, nor the Bank with him. What became of the money also, he did not know : perhaps it went to equip an expedition to Isle Dieu or Quiberon, or perhaps to some embel-lishments in Holyrood-house. When he said this, he did not feel at all disconcerted at the grimace which some gentlemen opposite to him assumed : he had sat long enough opposite to these gentlemen to be sufficiently acquainted with the effect of pantomime long ago. He trusted, however, that the right honourable gentleman would not affect to treat with contempt or levity the charge which he now preferred against him in his official capacity. He charged him with having imposed upon every party in the negotiation, with having countenanced a crime little less than forgery. And he pretended, however, not to be a common trader, he perhaps, might claim a privilege from common delinquency. He begged that they would consider for a moment the ruinous effect which the transaction was calculated to produce upon the market, and upon the characters as well as interests, of those who were the *bona fide* holders of the bills. Suspicions could not fail to be formed, not very favourable to the character of Government, nor very favourable to the characters of those, who *prima facie*, appeared to be parties in the transaction, and he would add, not very favourable to the credit of Government in future negotiations, and to the issue of money from the Treasury in a regular mode. Might not the right honourable gentleman, under the pressure of similar difficulties, be forced to have recourse to similar expedients, and when the Bank of England denies her aid, again to apply to Mr. Boyd for relief. And except Parliament stamp the transaction with some strong mark of disapprobation, they run the risk of seeing the same system of collusion, treachery, and fraud annually repeated. It was argued, indeed, that there could be no fraud in this, because there was

affects sufficient to answer all demands. But he would ask, if this was the case between the last payment of the old, and the first payment on the new loan? And he appealed to the Secretaries of the Treasury, whether some of their bills which were payable in January, did not run on till February. As it turned out, however, Mr. Boyd, by having the loan, had the means of paying himself. On a former night, they had been represented as equivalent to a promissory note, or Treasury warrant. There was one defect, however, in this simile, that it wanted all similitude; for, except Treasury warrants were always fictitious, they bore no resemblance to the bills in question. But was the Chancellor of the Exchequer really so ill qualified for the station which he holds, that he could not calculate the sum which the exigences of the public service for a year may require? Last year he hesitated whether he should make a loan of eighteen or nineteen millions. He determined, however, upon eighteen; and this was the expedient which in September following he was compelled to adopt. He must do something, however; Parliament was not sitting at the time, and to have negotiated a small loan, would have given the enemy a contemptible idea of our finances. To extricate himself from the dilemma, he condescended, in conjunction with Mr. Boyd, to frame fictitious bills, to date them in London at Hamburgh, to make a nominal drawer in Hamburgh, who was actually residing in Broad-street, London, at the time; and to make it throughout a consistent fiction, to write them upon unstamped paper. Was such a transaction as this fitted to inspire the enemy with lofty ideas of our financial resources? Had a noble Lord (Mornington) been in possession of such a fact against the Government of France, how would he have exulted over it in exposing their exhausted revenue? He was not aware of any thing more with which it would be necessary for him to trouble the House. He would therefore move, *pro forma*, that the passage of the Report to which his motion referred should be read; and then he moved three Resolutions.

1<sup>st</sup> That it appears to this House, that, in the month of September 1795, Walter Boyd, Esq. did, at the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, undertake to advance money for the use of Government to the amount of one million, for which he was to reimburse himself by bills to be drawn upon the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, to be accepted by them, and negotiated at his own convenience, and that bills to the amount of 700,000*l.*, were drawn in London on the Commissioners of the Treasury, in the name of Walter Boyd, Junior, bearing a fictitious date, at Hamburgh, several weeks preceding the time at which, with the privity of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, they were really drawn in London; and that the said Walter Boyd, junior, is a gentleman not engaged in any house of business at Hamburgh.

2<sup>d</sup> That it appears to this House, that the amount of the said bills was immediately paid into the office of the Paymaster of His Majesty's



forces, in direct breach of an Act of Parliament, and that the said bills, though drawn in London, yet professing to be foreign, and not written on stamped paper, were of such a nature and description as the Bank of England would have refused to discount for any commercial house whatever, and such as it would have been injurious to the credit of any private house to have negotiated.

3d That it appears to this House, that the practice of drawing such bills of exchange, not duly stamped, with fictitious dates of time and place, accepted by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, and causing the monies raised thereon to be immediately paid into the office of the Paymaster of His Majesty's forces, is illegal, unconstitutional, and highly injurious to the public credit; and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by the introduction of such practice, has brought into disrepute and suspicion the acceptance of His Majesty's Treasury, and sanctioned a system of fraud and collusion unprecedented in the administration of the finances of this country.

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Mr. CHARLES LONG engaged to give the House a fair and exact statement of the whole of this transaction. Early in the month of August, 1795, it was found necessary to raise money for the public service, in anticipation of certain portions of the payments on the loan and lottery, which remained unpaid, and which became due in the months of November, December, and January following. Mr. Boyd was applied to for this purpose, and through the means of a relation at Hamburgh, his agent there, with whom he had a variety of money transactions, he agreed to accommodate the Government. He recommended secrecy as necessary to the success of the measure, lest the knowledge of such a circumstance should produce a scarcity of money. Now it so happened that before this business actually took place, Mr. Boyd, jun. arrived in London, and the exigency of public affairs would not permit them to send to Hamburgh in any convenient time for a remittance of such bills as they wanted. The only irregularity that consequently took place, was the antedating of the bills, as from Hamburgh, for if they had been, actually drawn in Hamburgh and transmitted to London, he conceived they would have been perfectly regular.—This was the truth of the transaction, for he did not mean to disguise any part of it. The honourable and learned gentleman has called the bills fictitious, and the whole a swindling transaction.



Where there were no funds to pay the bills when due, he admitted such a transaction would amount to swindling, but he objected to such an application of the term where there was money or merchandise answerable to the full amount. But the honourable gentleman was obliged to have recourse to a common expedient, and supply weak argument by a strong expression. He had defined swindling to be a mode of obtaining money under false pretences; this was partly true, but he left out the material part of the context, "with a view to defraud." Now he contended that there was no fraud intended or practised in any part of this transaction. So far he was at issue with the honourable gentleman. It was now his intention to state what was the amount of the money in the Exchequer on the 10th of December 1795, and what was the amount afterwards paid in upon the old loan and lottery, and he should then, he trusted, be able to prove clearly and satisfactorily to the House, that there was more than sufficient to discharge the 700,000*l.* raised by the negotiation of these bills without any anticipation of the new loan. There was 310,000*l.* in the Exchequer at that time paid in upon the old loan and lottery, and 145,000*l.* was afterwards paid in on the same accounts before the close of 1795, and early in 1796, and before the time allotted for the payment of these bills 135,000*l.* more had been paid in as the last payment upon the old loan, and 160,000*l.* for the lottery, making in all 750,000*l.* and 200,000*l.* more was paid in February upon the loan for 1796, which, if necessary, might also have been applied. The next objection of the honourable gentleman was against the payment of the 700,000*l.* to the Paymaster General of His Majesty's forces. This, Mr. Long said he had been desired to do by order of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, and if he had offended against the letter of the Act of Parliament, he hoped he had not offended against the spirit of it. He understood that balances were not left in the hands of the Paymaster General, but he did not understand that money was not to be paid in his name, for that had always been the regular mode, though the money did not remain there, but was carried immediately to the Bank, and there placed in his name. The only difference was, that by carrying it to the accountant of the Pay Office, notice was thereby given to him of such payment, and in the end it amounted to precisely the same thing. He would not have troubled the House, if the honourable and learned gentleman had not connected this transaction with the negotiation of the loan. To prove that the Governor of the Bank entertained some suspicion that Mr. Boyd would have the preference of the loan the honourable gentle-

man had stated the Governor's declaration, that it was natural for him to think that this transaction could not impede Mr. Boyd in obtaining a preference; but he did not state upon what grounds the Governor actually did form his suspicions, who, being asked the question, replied, that "his reasons were, that he conceived Mr. Boyd's party, in point of good faith, had a claim to some preference in consequence of the conditions stipulated at the making of the preceding loan, having been deviated from; and he thought them too sagacious to omit availing themselves of that circumstance." Having argued this point, he asked, upon what evidence, admitting all its force, did this suspicion rest? It was upon that of Mr. Morgan; and he meant no personal offence, when he said he could not give credit to that assertion; and his reason was because the evidence of Mr. Morgan was full of inconsistency and contradiction. Having pointed out some little difference in this evidence as a proof of its inconsistency, Mr. Long said, he perfectly recollected the engagement between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Boyd upon the loan of 1795, which was, that if another loan was obtained for before the last payment of the old one, he should be entitled to the preference. He concluded by moving the previous question.

Mr. FOX rose merely to explain what he said on a former night on the subject of these bills. He had said, "it was raising money under false pretences." He would say again, that if a bill were drawn, purporting to be drawn at Hamburgh, but actually drawn in London, those who discount such a bill, raise money on false pretences, for they have no right to raise money from another upon a bill without telling the whole truth about that bill. It is no excuse to say, "that the security is good," for no man has a right to determine for another what is a good security.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY saw nothing to complain of in the transaction of these bills. There was a sum of money raised in the month of September. There must be a variety of operations provided for in our present state, and the demands of Government might easily exceed the money that is ready; Ministers could not foresee every thing, and if they did not provide by extraordinary measures when the necessity arose, very fatal consequences might ensue. He did not feel that this was a very extraordinary charge as to the amount of the sum. The other part of the charge against the Minister was this; that the transaction of these bills would lead foreign nations to suppose that we are driven to our last shift, otherwise we could not think of raising money in such a manner; and some gentlemen said, that the Bank of England were so well con-

vinced of the impropriety of this mode, that they refused to have any thing to do with such a transaction; that it would be ruinous to an individual. Thus they in effect said, that the Bank of England would not support the Government of England. He did not think that this was very fairly stated. He did not see that the Bank of England had given any such refusal as had been insisted upon. Mr. Giles said that the Bank was not applied to upon that subject, and therefore we might acquit both Government and the Bank on this part of the case. The truth was, that the mode adopted in the transactions of the bills, was not the usual mode with the Bank. Gentlemen said, that if this extraordinary demand for money was necessary, Parliament should have been called. It was an inconvenient time to call Parliament together. The Minister applied to a private banker for two millions of money; the answer was, "there is plenty of money." Gentlemen who wished so well to this country, did not take the trouble to explain this to a foreign country.

The next question was, the mode of raising this 700,000*l*. Mr. Boyd said, that a bill of exchange was the best possible instrument to be made use of for this purpose; and so it was; for in the course of business, a bill of exchange could be readily transferred, which could not be done with a bond or with a treasury warrant. The next question was, how far the Chancellor of the Exchequer was concerned in this? Undoubtedly he was bound to give Mr. Boyd that sort of security which he, as a private banker, liked best; and there was no crime in raising money by anticipation, either from the Bank, or from a private banker, as in this case; consequently there was no fraud in this transaction. If the country was so wealthy that Government can get money from individuals instead of the Bank, there was not much to fear from the want of it. The next point to be considered was the rate of interest in this case. Mr. Boyd required five per cent. instead of four per cent. This was explained by the evidence in the Report. This money was not to be all furnished by Mr. Boyd himself. It was not to come all out of his own coffers. The Bank never discounted under five per cent. and why should it be required that Mr. Boyd should do it for less? He was obliged to employ a broker in this transaction, whose commission was to be taken out of the profits, and which diminished them considerably. The broker's premium on the two millions and a half was a quarter per cent. on all he procured. In short, Mr. Boyd had no profit whatever, except where he advanced his own money. But if there had been a good deal of profit on the transaction, why should not Mr. Boyd receive it; in reality, however, his profit was not great. With regard to this being an entirely new

thing, he must observe that that observation was not well founded. He remembered a transaction in the year 1772: The bank of England agreed to advance 60,000*l.* on the security of a West-India estate; the Bank never discounted any bills at that time for more than two months. Bills in the case he alluded to (the case of Watson and Ellison, who had a house in Edinburgh) were drawn at two months. They were all dated, and purported to be drawn at Edinburgh, whereas the Bank knew that the person who drew them was constantly living in London. These bills were therefore drawn in a wrong place, and had a wrong date; yet although the Bank knew these things perfectly, they made no objection; the bills were renewed every two months, and the Bank went on discounting them in this way for two years. This was not called a fraudulent transaction, or a swindling transaction. It was the only way in which the Bank could or would do the business; and the false date or place never occurred to them to be any objection to discounting the bills. The only remaining point was, that these were foreign bills, which Mr. Boyd was concerned in, whereas they were actually land bills, and therefore ought to be drawn upon stamped paper. Now he could not see how there was any desire manifested in this transaction to defraud Government. Who was to receive the duty of the stamps? Government.—How then was Government defrauded of that duty by being excused from paying it? for if the bills were to be stamped, Government must have paid the duty. It was only saving Government the trouble of paying with one hand and receiving with the other. There was therefore no fraud of any kind in this business; it was intended that the whole should be paid to the bill-holders, and there was a sufficient fund for that purpose. It appeared to him in no other light than that Government had not calculated properly, as to the amount of the public expences, which might be necessary to be defrayed in the month of September 1772. The whole of the amount of the deficiency was only 700,000*l.* He was surprised it was no more, considering every thing which Government had to provide for; he really thought it was miraculous they had not a call for more than this sum at that time. Government ought to have a liberal allowance when under calculated expences. Under the present circumstances, they ought to be allowed to have more money in hand than they had immediate occasion for. If you were in the case of every common banker, who was always obliged to have more money by him than he had immediate occasion for, that banker might be able to answer an extraordinary demand whenever it should be made upon him. In this case there was no improper use made of the money raised upon these bills. Notice was immediately given

when the money was raised, and it was carried that very day to the Bank. In short every requisite was complied with which the law directs, and there was not, in this case, any deviation from the provisions of Mr. Burke's bill.

Mr. GREY said that he never was so much astonished in his life, as he was at many things which had fallen from the honourable Baronet; and his astonishment was still more increased to find, that an English House of Commons, which ought to be the guardian of the public purse, should treat a question of this magnitude, a charge of this importance, with so little patience or attention. He considered it as no ordinary or trifling subject. An error of 700,000*l.* did not appear to him so small, as to entitle the Minister to applause for the accuracy of his calculations. He wished to consider to what the error amounted. In February 1795, Mr. Pitt opened his budget, stating the probable expence, and the ways and means for raising it. He borrowed, for the purposes then set forth, a larger sum than ever had been before raised at one time in this country. Besides that, he received the duties on land and malt, considerable sums on Exchequer bills; and towards the close of the session, raised a farther sum of two millions and a half for the unforeseen expences that might be incurred; and yet it appears that so soon as the September following, he had not sufficient for the exigencies of the State. He was astonished to hear the honourable Baronet call this calculating to a miracle; he was astonished to hear him say this was a small deficiency. He was the more astonished, as in the month of August, fifteen millions eight hundred thousand pounds of the loan had been paid up; a sum fully equal to what could reasonably have been expected. But on this subject he would not now dwell at length, as a day would soon come (his motion on the state of the nation) when he would minutely enter into this and other subjects. He had no hopes that that motion would produce any good consequences; but it would at least give him the satisfaction of feeling that he had done his duty, that he had exposed to the House matters which loudly called for investigation, evils which ought to be redressed, and that, if they would still continue to approve a system of extravagance, mismanagement and double dealing, and suffer the country to be hurried on to its ruin, at least they should do so with their eyes open.

The Minister seems very confident with regard to his conduct; "I wish," said Mr. Grey, "it was the confidence of innocence, but I suspect it to be the supercilious insolence which certain protection inspires." The honourable Baronet had said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not calculate the expences of the public ser-

vice ; this was the very thing complained of : a small mistake in his calculations would not be a subject for censure ; but after having named and received the amount of the probable expences of the year, to raise in the manner he had done so large a sum as 700,000*l.* at so early a period as September, proved either that he wilfully deceived the House, or that he was inadequate to the duties of his office, or that some unforeseen demand had occurred which he was ashamed to publish. Mr. Grey here entered into some very able calculations respecting the interest which these bills, combined with the late loan, compelled the nation to pay. He clearly proved that this interest amounted to eight per cent. instead of five, as Sir W. Pulteney had said. He pressed the danger and unconstitutional tendency of allowing a Minister to anticipate a loan, as he had done in the present instance, and held up to reprobation a transaction which Ministers themselves acknowledged to be unfit for the Public to know. He shewed that there was an intimate connection between these bills and the loan, the first payments of which were made at the very time when one class of the bills became due. There seemed to be a collusion throughout both these transactions. Mr. Boyd discounted the bills, and Mr. Boyd had the loan that he might pay them. The transaction was not even fair with regard to Mr. Boyd ; for admitting that by the time these bills became due, the 700,000*l.* was in the Exchequer, and admitting that a change of Administration had taken place, an event which he acknowledged to be very improbable, might not the new Minister have found the money, or a great part of it, necessary for the current expences of the Government ; and in that case, what was to have become of these bills ; of these bills, which had been manufactured in such an irregular, if not illegal manner, that any Minister would have had great reason to refuse payment of them altogether ? In this respect therefore, he contended, that assets were not provided for these bills, and that consequently Mr. Boyd ran a great hazard of obtaining payment, or, at least, that a new Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been embarrassed to provide for the other service of the State without dishonouring the bills, a conduct in which he would have been too well justified. “ But,” says the honourable Baroness, “ of what importance is it that the bills were dated at Hamburg ? He thinks this an indifferent circumstance ; but said Mr. Grey, I think it a circumstance of the most serious importance, inasmuch as it involves in it the fairness and honour of the transaction, and the fairness and honour of both the parties concerned ; and might also lead to suspicions, of which the parties themselves appear to have been apprized, by their anxious concealment. The case of



Walter and Ellifon, did not apply to the present. In that affair the Bank was acquainted with the deception; and if any one suffered by it, it must be the Bank; but in the present instance, the Public, who was one of the parties, was kept in complete ignorance. He was sorry, however, that the honourable Baronet had not mentioned the result of the transactions of the house of Walter and Ellifon. He (Mr. Grey) happened to have known one of the partners in that house, an innocent but an unfortunate man. The result was, that the House became bankrupt, [*Hear! hear! hear!*] and the person to whom he had alluded, was compelled to fly and end his days in exile. Will the honourable Baronet say, that the Bank thinks such a transaction as these bills, is an honourable one? Mr. Giles, the Governor, has stated the very reverse, and given it as his opinion, that it would hurt the credit of any private house whatever; so much so, that the Bank would not discount for them: on this testimony, and this authority, he could give it no other description than that of a fraudulent transaction. Mr. Boyd has said it was necessary to him; and Ministers, it seems, were convinced it was necessary; but he trusted the House would not be induced to sanction a public transaction, which in private business between man and man they must condemn. He wished the enemy to be strongly impressed with an opinion of the extent and variety of our resources, of the flourishing state of our finances, but he would not be prevented by an apprehension that they might form a different opinion from complaining to that House, whenever it should appear to him that the prosperity of our finances was endangered by the misconduct of Ministers. With regard to what had been said about paying the money into the hands of the Pay-master General, he contended that it was a direct breach of an express act of Parliament, which, as a check on the Pay-master, enacted, that all monies should be paid into the Bank of England on his account, and that he should draw for the express sums which might be wanted for the public service. This was an excellent security for the public against fraud; and if Ministers found that the law stood in their way, they should have moved its repeal. The public money must have been used for some unknown purposes, otherwise these bills never could have had existence. Mr. Grey concluded by thanking his honourable friend for having brought this motion forward. It would shew the country on what sort of a system the business of Government was conducted; it would shew how fearful Ministers were that their conduct with regard to the finances, should fairly meet the light; it would shew to what shifts and tricks they were driven, in order to deceive the Public, and conceal our true situation.

Mr. STEELE said that money from the Exchequer went through the medium of the Bank to the Paymaster for the regular service, but balances of accounts with inferior Paymasters, and of the payment of troops on the Irish establishment, were sent to the Accountant's Office, from whence they were taken to the Bank by a clerk who attended for that purpose.

Mr. GREY said he did not talk of balances, but of money for current services issued from the Exchequer.

Mr. STEELE observed, that the act alluded to was to prevent the Paymaster General from carrying to his own private account, or lodging with his banker, what money was paid to the officers of the Pay-Office, or paid into the hands of the Paymaster General.

Mr. FRANCIS observed, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been eminently successful in embroiling the country in the present disastrous and unexampled war; and he thought, on a motion of the present importance, that mockery or sneers were neither decent nor becoming. He said, the honourable Baronet, whose abilities no gentleman would deny, never came forward but on extraordinary occasions, to relieve his right honourable friend from great embarrassments; and in proportion as the honourable Baronet failed in his defence, so far he considered the Chancellor of the Exchequer culpable, and deserving of censure. In the present instance he did not offer a single argument to relieve himself from the heavy charge brought against him by his learned friend. With respect to the Edinburgh bills, there was no evidence of the circumstance before the House; and however he might admit the veracity of the honourable Baronet, yet in his legislative capacity he was not bound to believe him; for the Report before the House was produced by its own Committee, but no Committee ever sat to report on the subject adverted to with respect to the Edinburgh bills. What the honourable Baronet had stated with respect to Government neither suffering loss nor gain in consequence of the Hamburgh bills not being stamped, was not the question before the House, but that which pressed most on the honour and credit of the country was the fraudulency of the transaction, and how far these bills were vitiated in the mode of circulation. On a former evening's debate, he pressed a question which he now wished to have answered. Mr. Morgan's name, he thought, was used in a very unbecoming and indecent manner; but now he must ask, why Mr. Morgan and Mr. Mellish were so used?

Mr. YORKE rose to order. He appealed to the House if it was not derogatory to the standing orders of the House for any gentleman to refer to a previous debate; the honourable



gentleman, in the present instance, he conceived, departed from that order.

The **SPEAKER** said, that he certainly awaited and expected an interruption from some Member of the House. He always felt extremely embarrassed, when under the necessity of calling any gentleman to order, and conceived that the honourable Member was irregular in referring to what occurred in a previous debate.

**Mr. FRANCIS** proceeded. He said, he would make no allusion to what passed on a former night, but would now ask—Why the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when Morgan and Mellish refused the qualified competition, did not send to the Bank, and give notice that he was ready to receive offers conditionally. To this he desired an answer, not upon the principle that such a competition was nugatory, but his own—

**Mr. Ryder** called **Mr. Francis** again to order.

**Mr. FRANCIS** said, he was about to shew the connection which subsisted between this point and the question before the House. His opinion was, that Boyd's preference in the loan was owing to his services in the affair of the Hamburg bills. He saw Boyd preferred without any satisfactory reason. He saw the fact of the Hamburg Accommodation bills, and combining these together, he was convinced that this was the true cause of the precipitate conclusion of a bargain, where the interest of the Public was so much sacrificed.

**Mr. Chancellor PITT.** I do not rise, Sir, for the purpose of giving any answer to the question proposed, or of speaking to the question now before us, but in order to state the reasons why I shall do neither one nor the other. In the first place, as to the question, I have, on a former occasion, given an answer to it, upon the nature of which the House have already decided. I cannot therefore repeat it now, without being as irregular as the gentleman who calls upon me so to do. With respect to the subject of the present debate I shall decline saying any thing, because, 'as far as it personally concerns me, I am quite satisfied as to the state in which it at present appears.'"

The **ATTORNEY GENERAL** said, that in the examinations before the Committee, all the witnesses but **Mr. Morgan** had agreed, that the preference in the loan had no connection with the Hamburg bills. In a bill of exchange accepted by the Secretary of the Treasury, the case was different from the case of individuals. The good faith of the country was pledged to make good the obligation that was incurred. It was of no consequence whether the shape was regular or not. Execution was competent against the Govern-

ment, and the holders would be entitled to recover from any Administration that could take place.

Sir FRANCIS BARING said, that the state of the exchange with foreign States arising from the scarcity of specie was a proof to foreigners acquainted with the subject, that money was not so plentiful as was asserted. Even if the bills had been drawn at Hamburg, in his opinion the transaction would not have been right. If there was no title in Boyd to draw on the Treasury, the bills being drawn at Hamburg, did not alter the transaction. If such a transaction would have been disgraceful, and the symptom of approaching ruin in a private speculation, he could not see that the case was different where Government was concerned. He was sorry that a transaction in which Boyd had been so considerable a gainer should have been on the ground of preference in still more lucrative concerns. The borrowing of 700,000*l.* in this way, in his opinion, injured Government more than a loan of 7,000,000*l.* in a regular manner.

Mr. W. SMITH did not mean to deny the inconsistency of Mr. Morgan's evidence, but wished to remark, that it was given under a considerable degree of personal agitation, and that there was the most sufficient proof to shew that it was not given with a view to mislead. He had afterwards desired leave to explain, but that was denied him; they should therefore lay less stress on the arguments drawn from his inconsistency, a circumstance also, it was to be remarked, from which Mr. Giles's evidence itself was not free.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL began by animadverting on the evidence given by Mr. Morgan, and on what had dropped from an honourable Baronet (Sir F. Baring). As to the former, he would only remark, that his answers and manner appeared to him to be such, as to entitle them to very little credit. In the opinion of the latter gentleman he could not coincide; for by him the transaction before the House was contended to be a fictitious transaction while it carried with it all the attributes of a real one. The bills were actually drawn by the Lords of the Treasury, they were accepted by the Secretary of the Treasury, and they were finally paid out of the Public Treasury. They were an instrument of that character and description upon which no man could hesitate to decide. He next proceeded to vindicate the propriety of the transaction on the ground of its necessity. The urgency of the public services required it. To answer that urgency, the 700,000*l.* were applied. It was therefore praise-worthy, and not blameable in the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not to permit the public service to suffer, but to have recourse to every possible means for procuring the most expeditious

supply. As to the money lost on the interest of the above-mentioned sum, on which so much declamation had taken place, it amounted only to the difference between three per cent. and five per cent. for four months; a paltry consideration, which must vanish when compared with the danger that might ensue from a momentary derangement in the public service. Much had been said to prove that such transactions should receive the sanction of Parliament; but this could not always be the case, as no man could pronounce at what time such exigencies of the State might occur. The business therefore now under discussion, and which was treated with such coarse contumely by some gentlemen on the opposite side, did not appear to him reprehensible either in the substance or the manner. Did he imagine the conduct of the right honourable gentleman wrong; he would not attempt to defend him; but being satisfied of the rectitude of that right honourable gentleman's intention, he most cordially gave him his support, and that unbiassed by any inclination arising from his political predilections.

Mr. M. ROBINSON was free to declare, that, for a long time he admired the splendid talents of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but that observation had of late taught him, that those talents could be misapplied and abused. From the preference given to Mr. Boyd and Co. in the late loan, it was but too evident that the Hamburg transaction was connected with it; in the advantages of both, many friends of the Minister had shared, and it was but natural that they should accord in suppressing whatever tended to scrutinize and censure his conduct. It was the first transaction of the kind in which any Minister of this country had been engaged, but it might not be the last. It ought, therefore, to meet that reprobation which might deter others from imitating it hereafter. He thought the character of Mr. Morgan had been used with extreme injustice. He had been called to answer before a jury of persons interested in the inquiry, and parties in the accusation, and he had even been denied the merit of an acquitted felon.

General SMITH said, that in matters of commercial concern, he would not consult the Attorney and Solicitor General, but would rely more implicitly upon the authority of the Governor of the Bank. Within six months after the estimates of the year were provided, and ample supplies granted, it became necessary to discharge the services of last year by an anticipation of the supplies of the present year. He was sorry to see that bills of this nature had been employed. He considered it as an unmanly collusion unworthy the great government of a great nation. He did not, however, think that the transaction amounted to that fraud which the resolution ex-

pressed, yet he hoped that such an expedient would never again be adopted. He conceived that Hamburgh was chosen as the place from which the bills were dated, to excite a belief that the loan to the Emperor had been remitted by bills of exchange, and thus to give an air of probability to the transaction and of respectability to the bills. Though he highly disapproved the measure, he could not assent to the proposition in the Resolution in its utmost extent and therefore would give no vote at all.

Mr. JEKYLL rose to reply. He adverted to what had been said by Mr. Long, with regard to the spirit of the Act of Parliament of the 23d year of the present reign, as also to what had been said by another gentleman on that side; they both agreed that the application which they made of the practice did not square with the letter of that act; they contented themselves with stating that they were right in defending the mode of transacting these bills, by the practice which had obtained ever since the passing of that act; now he must confess that what was directly in the teeth of the act could never be defended on the score of practice. The moment there was a departure from the act, then it was infringed; and it was a bad way of arguing to maintain that we are right in disobeying the order of an act of Parliament, because others had disobeyed them; and the practice which these honourable gentlemen insisted upon, was nothing less than an entire contravention of the act of Parliament. With regard to the case of the Edinburgh bills which had been alluded to by the worthy Baronet, he must remark, that it differed widely from the present, for in that case all the parties concerned in the bills knew what they were; whereas, in the present instance, the holder of any one of these bills could have no knowledge whatever of the real nature of the transaction. Besides, these Edinburgh bills could not have been subject to any law concerning stamps, for they were prior to the stamp act concerning bills of exchange, so that the parallel which the worthy Baronet had drawn, did not apply to the present case. Much had been said on the evidence of Mr. Morgan, as given before the Committee. Mr. Morgan was a man of infinite credit and unquestionable veracity, and on whose evidence there could not fairly be fixed a particle of doubt. And here he could not help observing, he was surprised that some gentlemen who sat on that Committee should have conducted themselves as they had done, and particularly one of them. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer was implicated in the question before the House, he very properly withdrew; he wondered that some persons to-night did not observe the same degree of delicacy. Many gentlemen sat upon that Committee as arbitrators to decide upon the

own delinquency, and one of those very persons who are accused by the present motion, now modestly said that Mr. Morgan was not to be believed on his examination. The Chancellor of the Exchequer now thought it prudent, in the character of a charged delinquent, and that on a charge as serious as any that could well be laid to any man's character, to remain totally silent. He suffered his defence to be conducted by his friends, (no doubt of their ability), but it was a little unfortunate they could not agree in the mode of conducting his defence. The Attorney General was of opinion, that an action might be brought by the holder of these bills. The Solicitor General was of another opinion. Now he would say that he did not know how the holder of one of these bills could have proceeded to enforce payment. He did not know, in the event of a change of Administration, between the issuing of these bills, and the time they became due, what remedy the holder had. He did not know that a succeeding Minister could be bound on what the Attorney General called the good faith of Government, to take up these bills and discharge them; the money voted by Parliament might appear to that Minister to be applicable to other purposes. The Solicitor General, however, doubted whether any action at all could be brought by the holder of such bills; and he believed the latter gentleman was right. He wanted to know how he could bring such an action. How could he come into a Court of Law but by a formal action? That action must be brought against somebody. [Here there was something said over the table from the Treasury Bench which we could not hear]—on which Mr. Jekyll observed: "Another of the friends of the right honourable gentleman now tells me you cannot bring any action at all. Here is another beautiful feature in the character of this transaction. They are not only fictitious bills, but you cannot have any remedy on them in a Court of Law. Now, they are under the necessity of invalidating their own bills in order to defend their own conduct. I say it is the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to look forward to the pressure of public affairs when he makes a loan. He should have had a foresight of the necessity of having two millions and a half in the month of September, after he had borrowed 18 millions for the service of the year. The Public have this business before them—the House has this business before it. If this House thinks that after the arguments they have heard, the pressure of it demands they should support the Minister, the affair is theirs. If they think that from what they have heard on this side, the House calls for no better answer than has been given upon this subject, I have nothing to say more than to protest, that to my mind the total silence of the

Chancellor of the Exchequer proves the consciousness he feels of a bad administration—That he began with superciliousness, and ends with defeat and silence!

Mr. MARTIN said, he agreed with the sentiments of General Smith upon this subject, that the conduct of the Minister was extremely irregular as a man of business; but he was not prepared to go the length of fraudulent, as stated in the original motion.

The House divided;

For the previous question	-	-	109
For the original resolution	-	-	24
			—85

The House divided on the second resolution;

For it	-	-	8
Against it	-	-	108
			—100

While strangers were out, we understand that a debate took place on a point of order. Sir William Young had called for a division, and that the Ayes should go out, but did not go out himself, which Mr. Grey thought disorderly, and a very pointed conversation took place. The matter was at last settled by the Speaker and the other orders of the day being disposed of, the House adjourned.

*Tuesday, March 1.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT stated, that on a former night he had submitted his ideas to the House upon the defects of the Poor Law, and he wished that a fair opportunity should be afforded of discussing the subject. His ideas were not then by any means matured, and all that he intended at present was, merely to move for leave to bring in a bill, in which he might arrange those ideas which were then very imperfectly conveyed. He thought it unnecessary to move more in so thin a House, than merely to express his wish, that a bill should be brought in and printed before Easter. He begged however that the bill, when it appeared, might not be considered as affording a perfect and complete remedy for the existing evil, but merely as a mode of attracting the attention, and collecting the sentiments of the House, upon a subject of great and pressing importance. He would therefore move for leave to bring in a bill for the better Regulation of the Laws relating to the Relief and Employment of the Poor.

Leave was given, and Mr. Chancellor PITT, Mr. RYDE and Mr. DOUGLAS, were appointed to prepare and bring in the bill.



Mr. LECHMERE said, that he was induced, by two considerations, to submit to the House the motions which he was about to propose—the alarming rise on the price of bread, and the great severity of the weather. The high price of bread was a fact too evident to be doubted, and too melancholy not to be lamented. It should be his object, at present, to point out the most obvious mode of redressing the grievance. The scarcity, in his opinion, proceeded from the consolidation of farms, and an enormous monopoly among great and opulent farmers, mealmen, and flour-dealers. In confirmation of his opinion, he read extracts from several letters which he had received from different quarters of the country, in which the writers blamed the immense exportation to Guernsey and Jersey, as a principal cause of the existing evil. Another gentleman stated, that as he was travelling by night, he had met with vast numbers of waggons laden with flour, in the neighbourhood of Richmond, Yorkshire, driving to the sea coast, for exportation. It is impossible, said Mr. Lechmere, that the poor man can live, or that comfort can be extended to the industrious cottager, whilst such diabolical practices are permitted to exist. The scarcity, he contended, was in a great measure a mere bugbear, held forth to the people, under which the opulent farmers contrived to keep up a gross and scandalous monopoly, a mere pretence for alarming the nation, and promoting the selfish views of these suckers of blood from the people. He begged leave to mention to the House a circumstance which had occurred to him the other day: a coachman to Mrs. Harrison, Grosvenor-square, brought him a quartern of wheat, along with a few ears of unpounded wheat, all which, he said, he had picked from a single truss of straw. The wheat weighed three pounds four ounces, which was as much as the weight of a quartern loaf. From this he calculated, that in a single load of straw there are thirty quartern loaves lost, which afforded this conclusion, that grain was not so scarce as was represented, else the farmers would be more careful in threshing out the corn. This waste he accounted for, from the thresher being paid by the truss, or the bushel, instead of by the day. To prevent monopolies, he suggested, that as there are two overseers at present in every country parish, there should be two Corn Inspectors appointed, who should deliver in, every year, an exact account of the produce of each farm in the parish. This proceeding could excite no jealousy, as all the farmers in the parish would be obliged to accept the office in their turn.—Of all the pests with which society was infested, jobbers were the most pernicious. It was to jobbers in cattle that the present high price of butcher's meat was to be ascribed,

and jobbers in corn produced the scarcity which was now lamented. He had heard that the cattle jobbers go no less than 200 miles from town, to intercept the cattle coming to the London market, and that, before they reach Smithfield, they pass through no less than six or seven hands, all of whom have considerable profits. Corn, he had no doubt, was forestalled in a similar manner. Coal factors were not allowed to be coal dealers, and he saw no reason why the same prohibition should not extend to corn factors, and every person who wished to become a corn dealer be obliged to take out a licence. Since taxes must be paid, let them rather be paid by the rich and opulent dealer, than screwing from the hard hands of the working poor. He suggested also, that there should be a regular account taken, by an Exciseman, of the quantity of corn in possession of the corn-dealer, and that he should not be permitted to purchase more, after having a certain quantity, till four-fifths of his store should be disposed of. The small samples of corn that were brought to market, Mr. Lechmere alledged to be the cause of a great hardship to the poor; for when a poor man wanted a bushel of wheat from his master, he was told that he could not have it, because all his crop was disposed of. To remedy this evil, he would propose that never less than a bushel should be brought to market as a sample; that there should be a public granary in every market town, where these bushels should be deposited, and sold out to the poor; and that in every parish there should be a hand-mill and an oven, by which they could get it prepared into bread. He venerated the poor, as the strength and most respectable part of the community; he pitied their distresses, and he wished to do every thing in his power to alleviate them. For this purpose, the grand object was, to prevent the exportation of corn; and he would propose, that vessels should be freighted solely for the purpose of exporting to Guernsey and Jersey; that the captain should have a certificate from the Excise officer at the port where he took in his cargo; that he should be obliged to bring a certificate from the port where he landed; and that, on conviction of forgery, the punishment should be death without the benefit of clergy. He hoped to be excused for trespassing so far upon the patience of the House; but the distresses of the poor at this moment were such, that it was a reflection upon the Legislature not to take some steps to remedy them. In the part of the country from which he came, (Worcester), the labourer's wages were not more than 6s. a week: the quartern loaf was now at 1s. 3d. and, supposing a poor man to have a wife and five or six children, he wished to know how he can furnish them even with bread to eat. He dwelt upon these things, not to inflame the



minds of the people, but to excite the House to take some steps to alleviate their calamities. He concluded with moving, "That the Chairman of the Committee be directed to move the House for leave to bring in a bill to prevent the exportation of corn; and also for leave to bring in a bill to prevent corn from being sold at market by small samples."

Mr. FRANCIS rose to second the motion. He expressed his regret, that a subject so extremely important should not have attracted a more numerous attendance, and that the efforts of the honourable mover, directed to an object of the highest national concern, should not receive the attention which they seemed to deserve. Though there were many points in which he agreed with the honourable gentleman, there were some parts of his statement on which he felt himself disposed somewhat to differ with him in opinion. But from this difference of sentiment, and even out of the contradictions of those who were sincerely desirous to promote the same object, and anxious to collect every point of possible information, some good might arise. The result of their enquiries might add something to the stock of knowledge of those who were engaged in more elaborate and extensive researches; and their limited or jarring views might enable persons, of more enlightened and comprehensive minds, to form a more perfect and satisfactory conclusion.—There was one point on which he most completely agreed, namely, the propriety of taking the poor out of the hands of the millers, and affording them an opportunity to grind for themselves; but on that particular topic he should say more hereafter. The honourable gentleman had mentioned one important fact, which ascertained that, in threshing out one truss, a very large proportion of wheat had been wasted. The fact was extraordinary, and entitled to attention. The cause was sufficiently obvious. Such negligence could only have taken place with respect to the property of a large farmer. To a little farmer, no such accident could have happened: he could not be so careless as to overlook such a gross instance of neglect on the part of his labourers. That waste which the large farmer did not perceive, from the extent of his capital, which he did not miss from the largeness of his returns, would affect very differently the farmer on a smaller scale. If similar profusion should result from his inattention, the consequence to him must be speedy and inevitable ruin. Here then was so far a proof of the mischief of large farms, and of the tendency which they had to increase the evil of a scarcity.—But agreeing with the honourable gentleman on this point, he was not equally prepared to say that the existence of jobbers was altogether mis-

chievots. He did not know whether, instead of being regarded as injurious monopolists, they are not rather to be considered as convenient agents for keeping up the communication between markets and the farmers, and transmitting supplies from one part of the country to another. He had strong doubt whether, in this point of view, they ought not to be encouraged as useful agents, and whether their utility might not be still further improved by adoption of judicious regulations. At all events, he remarked the danger of running in with popular prejudice on this subject. Under the name of Jobber, a cry might be raised against those who lived whose services were, in fact, extremely beneficial to the community. An innocent, and even meritorious character, might become the victim of rash calumny and unmerited odium.—As a proof of the mischief of large farms, Mr. Francis mentioned, that a fine farm on his estate falling vacant, a person who rented a large farm applied to be the tenant; and found means to get it into his hands. He paid a liberal rent, and perhaps could afford it better than a poorer man, whose necessity would have stimulated him to greater personal exertions. But what was the consequence? The houses on the farm, the out-houses, and the materials of industry in the neighbourhood, were allowed to fall into a state of dilapidation and decay. Upon applying to a judicious friend, who was skilled in these matters, he (Mr. Francis) received this advice, “Never let any farm to a tenant who did not live upon the premises, such a conduct must always tend to the destruction of the houses and the materials of industry collected in the neighbourhood.” With respect to the complaint of large quantities of corn being hoarded by the farmers, he did not know how far any precaution of this sort was really pernicious. It was unquestionably requisite to have some stock on hand, and, if it could be conveniently managed, it would be desirable to have public magazines. The conduct of the farmers then, in holding a large quantity in their own hands, served in some sort to answer the purpose of a magazine: and so far as it had this effect, it was that very conduct which, if adopted in any other form, Government ought to encourage and protect. But the object which he had most at heart, and which had chiefly induced him to rise, related to the grinding of corn.—The mischief to the poorer classes, in his view of the subject, arose not so much from the bakers and farmers, as from the mealmen and millers. There was one criterion from which he judged: he had not heard that farmers and bakers acquired large fortunes from the profits of their business; he hardly knew one instance of a rich baker. The millers were those who were chiefly benefited; out of sixty-

pounds of grain, they returned only forty-six of flour; allowing one pound for bran, this still left a considerable proportion, which they contrived to get for themselves, either by means of false weight, or under pretence of toll. By the bye, he remarked, that this practice ought for ever to be abolished. The miller ought not to be permitted to exact payment for his labour in kind. It was an opening for every species of abuse and fraud; they ought to receive their payment according to the number of bushels. He noticed a circumstance which, in his opinion, was exceedingly improper, and called for inquiry; in some part of the country, he believed Dorsetshire, one person united the following characters, farmer, mealman, miller, baker, and merchant. Such an union of occupations afforded an opportunity for very unfair advantages. Some regulation ought to be adopted, compelling the millers to take only money, and to give a more exact return of the grain put into their hands. He should add only one word more. In India he had frequently witnessed corn ground by the hand. At the door of every house, men, women, and even children, were to be seen grinding corn with the greatest ease. Could the practice be adopted in this, it would save to the poor the whole of those exorbitant profits which were now engrossed by the miller. Here Mr. Francis read from a letter a description of the hand-mill employed in India, of which he also exhibited a small model on the table.

The following is the description of the mill.

It is constituted of two circular horizontal stones, rough on the inside, and the under one the most weighty, in order to preserve them steady in circulation; their density and diameter being rendered commensurate to the size and strength of the person, whether man, woman, or child, who is to work them; the upper stone moves vertically loose on the axis, to yield a cavity, sufficiently capacious, for the reception of different quantities and qualities of grain; the holes on each side the pivot are for admission of the seed, taken from a measure, placed within reach of either hand, through those apertures, the grain falls between the stones; the handle is placed distant as possible from the centre, to facilitate, as well as to accelerate the rotatory motion.

In various economical tracts, and legislative discussions relative to provisions recently given to the public, frequent representations are exhibited of frauds perpetrated in mills, to the exceeding detriment of the poor; a distribution, therefore, of this little machine, or of one of similar construction, on any previous design, amongst the indigent and laborious classes of the community, the needy tenantry of landed property, or within the house of industry, might conduce, probably, to their immediate benefit in point of subsistence, and to their eventual relief and comfort.

The fabrication of them may be rendered cheap, by using the old worn-down stones of wind, water, or other large mills.

Such a mill might be introduced in all villages, at an expence of fourteen or fifteen shillings. It could be managed with the greatest

ease by the children, who had nothing else to do; who might grind a sufficient quantity of grain for the consumption of the family. In addition to this mill, he should propose, to have in every village a public bake-house, where the poor might bake their own bread, which would also be to them a circumstance of considerable advantage. He concluded with returning thanks to his honourable friend, for the attention he had shewn in bringing forward this subject.

Mr. POWYS was of opinion, that nothing could be more efficacious than to propagate an opinion, that the present was a fictitious and artificial scarcity. The honourable member who recommended the motion should have attended the Committee, and there he would have learned that many of the assertions in his speech were unfounded. The people should be taught to expect to feel the effects of the season, and should be informed, that Parliament was using its utmost endeavours to alleviate the distresses that were likely to occur from the failure of the wheat harvest. The honourable member must have shut his eyes to the facts which had been brought forward in the Committee of the House of Commons, where it was stated that the scarcity was artificial and fictitious, arising from the combination of the farmers and dealers in corn. But the people should look to what the legislature had done, and was doing; the Houses of Parliament had set an example, which, if followed, would, he had no doubt, relieve the scarcity in an extraordinary degree, until the return of the next harvest. The measure recommended by the honourable member, with respect to preventing the miller from taking toll, and obliging him to receive money as a substitute, was a matter, which if the honourable gentleman had attended to, he would have seen that the Committee had already taken into its consideration.

Mr. ROSE said, what had been recommended by the honourable member, for the regulation of the exportation of corn, was partly the law since the reign of Charles II. In the acts of the 13th and 14th of that Monarch, it was enacted, that all vessels which carried corn coast-ways, should be shipped in the presence of an officer of the customs, from whom a certificate was granted, to be delivered to the officer of the port for which the vessel was destined. In consequence of this measure, every fraudulent attempt to export to foreign countries was always detected. With respect to what had been stated of the supply sent to the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, it never amounted to more than 9,500 quarters; and could only be shipped at Southampton, and from the zeal of the customs officers, he was firmly persuaded that the stipulated quantity was never fraudulently exceeded. If the captains declined doing t

duty, in exhibiting their legal documents, they were liable to an action in the Exchequer. So far the law stood precisely in the situation the honourable gentleman wished, and he therefore hoped that he would not persist in his motion.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, he had received many letters from his constituents in Yorkshire, complaining of the exportation of corn. This circumstance he represented to Government, and discovered that the representations proceeded from error. He agreed with his honourable friend (Mr. Powys) that the honourable member who made the motion did not attend the Committee above stairs, where he might have suggested his ideas without having recourse to that sort of declamation in Parliament, which was more likely to raise a spirit of jealousy in the people, than to allay their distresses. He himself, though certainly he had a variety of business, attended constantly; and the honourable member who spoke last, though still more employed in public business, gave every assistance to the present inquiry of Parliament, the great object of which was to adopt such proceedings as might enable the corn at present in the country, to last, with frugality, till the next harvest.

Mr. CURWEN was of opinion, that the propositions of the honourable member who made the motion, were in a great measure substantiated by those, by whom he was attempted to be answered. He was of opinion, that every gentleman who came before Parliament to deliver his sentiments on the present important business, should meet with a patient hearing, and not an indignant repulse. From a candid investigation of the subject, he had no doubt but there existed a combination of evils, to which the poor fell victims. In this view he considered large farms. The holders of these of course possessed extensive granaries, and could take advantage of the markets; while the small farmer was obliged to bring his stock to market, and sell it at a reasonable price. He concluded by repeating what he had asserted on a former night, that the price of meal should be regulated by the price of the grain, from which it was produced.

General SMITH maintained that no gentleman ought to be reprehended for stating his sentiments before Parliament in his Legislative capacity. He attended the Committee above stairs; but no gentleman, he contended, who did not attend, should be censured for giving every information to the House on so important a question. He firmly believed that there was a combination between the miller and the farmer, and perhaps the merchant, to keep up the market, otherwise there could not be that extraordinary rise in the price of corn which had taken place within the last week.

When gentlemen acknowledged that they received numbers of letters complaining of an illegal exportation of corn, he insisted there was much ground for suspicion.

General TARLETON was of opinion that the honourable member who made the motion, was entitled to the thanks of the House. He was of opinion that the jobbers in corn were the cause of the present high price of bread, which every gentleman of feeling and philanthropy must deplore.

Mr. BUXTON was of opinion that the Legislature should not interfere with respect to the size of farms. If such a measure adopted, many being extensive tracts, which were alone confined to tillage, would, by being parcelled out among several hands, produce near the quantity of grain. As to the remark made on the threshing of corn, that wanted no regulation, as the laws would secure the farmer justice if his labourers neglected their work. The Committee had already come to a resolution to oblige the miller to take money instead of toll; and considering the steps which it had taken, he would move that "The Chairman do leave the chair."

Mr. LECHMERE contended, that since the Committee had taken no one step had been taken to alleviate the distresses of the people. He meant no reflection on the Committee, and disclaimed any intention of inflaming the public mind; no man was a greater enemy to public outrage:—He declared that he never courted popularity at the expence of the public peace. He held a letter in his hand dated in the month of November, which stated, that considerable quantities of corn had been exported from Morpeth and Red-briar to the coast of France. This letter, and other facts, he submitted to the Committee, but they had met with no attention, and he was treated with neglect; such conduct he therefore thought, was a very great encouragement to induce him to give that attendance to the want of which an honourable gentleman had been pleased to complain.

Mr. MARTIN rose to notice what he conceived to be a misapprehension of Mr. Lechmere, with respect to the price of labour in Worcester-shire. Labourers in that quarter certainly received considerably more than a shilling *per diem*. There was nobody more anxious than he was to concur in every proposition for the relief of the people, but from what he had heard that night, he should be induced to withhold his support from the motion, as he understood that the Committee were doing every thing above stairs which could be effectual for the object in view.

Mr. HUSSEY said, that the honourable mover had mentioned many things which he very much approved; but as there was



thing matured in the form of his motion, or specific in its object, he could not give it his support. It had been said, that there did not exist a real scarcity; on this subject he should give no opinion. But surely it was a question which ought not to be left in uncertainty. There was some way or other of determining it, and means ought to be immediately taken, in order to ascertain a point of so much importance, as whether the scarcity was real or artificial. If the scarcity was found to be real, the loyalty and good sense of the people of England would dispose them to submit in patience. It rested with Government to institute the investigation. With respect to what had been stated on the subject of exportation to Guernsey, &c. he lived in the neighbourhood of Southampton, and before he left the country, the people there had been very much alarmed at the large quantity of grain brought to Southampton for the purpose of being exported. An honourable gentleman had said, that by law only 9,500 quarters could be exported, but this did not preclude more from being sent out of the country, if submitted to the inspection of the proper officers; and though he could not produce evidence of the fact at the bar, he had every reason to believe, that a much larger quantity had actually been exported from Southampton.

Mr. BUXTON lamented, that an idea had gone abroad, that the scarcity was not real. He remarked that the returns from the Lords Lieutenants with respect to the state of the harvest in the country, were generally unfavourable; and that at any rate, as, from the pressure of scarcity, we had begun with the last crop two months before the usual time, there must, at any rate, be a deficiency of those two months.

Mr. W. SMITH said, that from the result of every inquiry which he had made, he lamented very much to find that the scarcity was real, and that the produce of last year's crop fell very much short of what was the average crop of the country. If we were to continue to exhaust our wheat in a lavish manner, without any regard to the deficiency of the stock in hand, the consequence must be a real scarcity. One useful effect of the high price of flour had been to diminish the consumption. In order to remove to a still greater distance the period of actual scarcity, it was of the utmost importance to impress upon the minds of the incredulous a firm conviction of the immediate and pressing necessity of adopting every possible economical regulation. A great number of the poor were, as he believed, erroneously persuaded that the scarcity arose from the prevalence of monopoly, and that the state of the markets was to be ascribed to the conduct of the farmer in hoarding up a

great quantity of grain, in order to enhance the price. A person who was very much conversant with the poorer class of the community, had told him the other day, that their language on the present occasion was, "that they were labouring under great distresses, and that if these were not soon remedied, they would bear them no longer." He took then the opportunity to represent to him the necessity to inculcate the impropriety and absurdity of such language, its inefficacy to procure any relief under the actual pressure, and its dangerous tendency to the peace of the country. In Hertfordshire, the common people had an idea that the mills were kept at work for Government. It was difficult to understand what they meant by this, but the uneasiness they expressed on the subject, sufficiently shewed that they entertained a suspicion of some unfair dealing. It was therefore of the utmost consequence to give them the most convincing evidence, that the scarcity proceeded from a real deficiency of the harvest, and that no effectual remedy could be found for the evil, except by a temporary abstinence from the use of wheat, in the same proportion as before.

Mr. Chancellor PITT. I rise to say a few words, chiefly in consequence of what has fallen from an honourable gentleman (Mr. Hussey) on the subject of exportation. I am not aware that any more than 9,500 quarters of wheat have been sent to Guernsey, &c. except so much as might be required for the use of the troops there, and which amounts to so small a proportion, as cannot possibly affect the consumption of this country. If, indeed, a greater quantity of grain has been carried out clandestinely, I cannot take upon me to answer to that fact. I can only say, that there are laws in force to punish such a proceeding, and that there has been no want of vigilance to give to those laws their fullest effect. If gentlemen can suggest any better means to remedy the evil, than which the laws have already provided, the country will certainly be much indebted to them for the discovery. It is undoubtedly of importance, with respect to the country at large, to stop either the progress of the real evil, or what may be equally dangerous, the impression of the imaginary evil. And surely the experience of this night's debate has, in more respects than one, afforded pretty strong ground to distrust hasty and exaggerated statements. As to the general question; an honourable gentleman has expressed a great desire to know how far the scarcity is real. It would be of great importance to ascertain this point, if there were any mode in which it could be readily and satisfactorily determined. Great pains have already been taken to collect local information on the subject, and to compare the result of communications from different quarters.



What more can be done, except by creating a great deal of unnecessary alarm, without producing any ultimate good purpose? I know of no other mode than the compulsory taking of stock—a proceeding which would infallibly do much harm, and upon which, in my opinion, no salutary measure could be founded. With respect to the causes of the scarcity here, as in every other complex case, I am inclined to think, that he that should lay down to himself a very clear and decisive opinion of the direct and immediate cause, would, in all probability, be led into error. I will venture to say, that if the farmers who are in possession of the grain, if the buyers and sellers were equally aware of the quantity which is now in the country, the price would not be what it is at present. At the same time, while I think the price higher than a fair consideration of every circumstance might warrant, I by no means consider the scarcity as artificial, or as entirely resulting from the prevalence of forestalling and monopoly, from the avarice of farmers, and the frauds of jobbers. Last harvest the wheat crop was undoubtedly deficient. All the other crops, however, which furnish an useful substitute, were not only plentiful, but in such abundance, as to be even in a greater proportion than the deficiency of the wheat. All then that is wanting is, only that the country should make up its mind to its situation, and in lieu of the deficiency of the wheat harvest, avail itself of those means of supply, which the crops have so amply afforded. This situation I contend to be no great evil, as it has been invidiously represented. I do not affirm that it is no inconvenience; but it is surely an unjust exaggeration to represent many of those sorts of bread proposed as substitutes, as unwholesome and unfit for the support of labouring people, which, in some parts of the country, constitute the sole food of the industrious poor, and which it would be to them a sacrifice to renounce. Because there is a scarcity in one article, and that so amply compensated by other substitutes, I cannot endure that this partial scarcity should be confounded with a famine. Though I lament that the substitutes which I have been suggesting are not so generally adopted as might have been wished, I am still averse to adopt any compulsive method; I only wish to invite the labouring class, by our example, to make the experiment for themselves, which will most effectually shew them the falsity of those objections, which are at present so successfully addressed to their ignorance or their prejudices. I have the satisfaction to state, that in many parts of the country, other bread than wheaten has been introduced, and that in most of the populous towns, the consumption is considerably diminished. I consider it as a public duty to declare, though I am sensible there is

some risk in such a declaration, that it is my belief, and my hope, that those who at present keep up the corn with a view to enhance the price, will find themselves in the end materially mistaken. At the same time I repeat, that I am persuaded the scarcity does arise from the practices of monopolists and jobbers, and that nothing can be more mischievous than to raise a cry against a particular description of men, who are making as fair a use of their capital as any other class of men engaged in trade, and who form one of the immense links of that system of industry which bind together the different ranks of men in a commercial country, who chiefly promote the disposal of their superfluities, and facilitate the supply of the wants. Nothing can be more reprehensive, as well as dangerous, than when men, from whose situation in society we naturally expect more enlightened views and more liberal sentiments, can, on a subject like this, lend themselves to confirm vulgar errors and strengthen vulgar prejudices, to mislead ignorance, and enflame discontent. If it be asked, what are the causes of the scarcity, there is one cause which is attendant on the debate of this day, by provoking discussion, from which no good purpose can be answered, which can tend only to create unnecessary alarm, and to enhance the evil without bringing forward any well-digested plan of remedy. I do not say, that it is our duty to dissemble the existence of the evil, but it is equally our duty not to exaggerate it by any aggravated description. We ought to recollect, that with respect to this, as to every other article of commerce, the effect of any alarm of scarcity is to produce a temporary stagnation, which, so long as it lasts, is in every respect equal to the evil of scarcity. By continuing to dwell on the topic, by enhancing the picture of the actual pressure, by lamenting sufferings with which it is attended, and by raising melancholy anticipations of the danger of approaching famine, a spirit of universal terror is generated, and each place feels an interest to lock up the grain of which it is in possession, in order to guard against the threatened calamity. Alarm and jealousy are propagated among the markets; those in the country are afraid that London may swallow up all the stock, and anxious to stop every supply to that quarter. Looking forward to the fancied evil, they keep more than they want for their own consumption, and under the influence of panic, sell at an exorbitant price to one another, what they refuse to dispose of upon the same terms to others. Being thus called upon, it was important that we should state to the public, that we do not neglect their interests, that we equally participate in the anxiety which they now feel with respect to the scarcity; but that though we regard it as an object of solicitude, we

no means consider it as a ground of despondence. There is, indeed, nothing in our present situation which can justify such melancholy anticipation; we have only to look to the existence of the evil, and to meet it by those means which are best adapted to alleviate its pressure; and if next harvest be such as we have every reason to hope, the inconvenience which we now suffer will then be completely remedied.

General SMITH thought, that to convince the people they have no real danger to apprehend, would be a good measure if the House had time enough for that purpose; but he doubted it. He thought, however, in the present situation of things, that nothing would be effectual but some compulsory measure to enforce the use of coarse bread, for persons of all descriptions, without distinction.

Mr. FRANCIS rescued his honourable friend, Mr. Lechmere from any imputation of exciting discontent among the people. He thought him deserving of the thanks of the public for bringing the subject forward, for that the discussion would do good. He renewed the warning which he gave the House on this subject two months ago, not to lose time, but to come to a compulsory measure at once with regard to bread of a certain quality, and finer than which none should be made. If they neglected this advice now, it might soon be too late to think of it. He did not agree with the Minister that debates of that House created any discontent among the laborious part of the people, who seldom or never read them. What made them feel was the exorbitant price of provisions. - He trusted the House would do all it could do to avert what appeared to him to be an evil of the most serious consequence.

General TARLETON, after paying Mr. Lechmere a compliment for the goodness of his motives in bringing this subject forward, thought it would be advisable for him to withdraw it at present.

Mr. HONEYWOOD expressed a strong desire that the poor should be relieved, but expressed an apprehension that the bread which was called mixed bread, which the poor purchased, was much inferior to that mixed bread which was allowed by gentlemen to their servants, and baked at their own houses. He thought that this matter ought to be much better regulated than it had been hitherto.

Mr. MARTIN said, that he would be extremely glad to consent to any measure that should relieve the poor; he thought that if there was to be any difference the poor ought to have better bread than the rich, because the poor had but little bread to eat; but as the Committee above stairs had made considerable progress in their in-

quiry into the price of grain, he thought it would be proper to wait for the Report of that Committee.

Mr. HUSSEY hoped that this conversation would not be lost. He was afraid that by the present high price of corn, the farmers had learned a lesson of which the House could not easily cure them. With respect to the price of corn, his idea was, that articles of food should be put upon a footing with regard to their price, and a mode of regulating it, different from any article that was the subject of sale. That was certainly his opinion. He felt a reluctance in making any compulsion as to the standard of bread, but he thought that the House must come to a regulation that none but brown bread of a certain standard should be made of wheat in the country.

The question was then put, "That the Chairman do not leave the chair, and carried without a division; and the House being resumed, agreed to go into a Committee on Tuesday next to consider farther of the high price of corn.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought up the report of the amendments on the succession Tax bill.

On the question being put, that the amendments be read a first time,

Mr. CURWEN rose and objected to a measure of such importance being brought forward in so thin a House. His opposition could not arise from a dislike to the tax, for taking it in a general point of view, it was one to which he had no objection, but he lamented the absence of his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) who, he understood intended to deliver his sentiments on the subject.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he was concerned for the cause of the right honourable gentleman's absence, the assistance of whose abilities he most certainly would wish to have on this, as on every other occasion. The bill was printed, and had been a considerable time before the House, and every thing had been done on his part to give gentlemen the fullest opportunity of examining its merits. It stood for discussion on the preceding night, but was postponed by consequence of the unexpected length of the debate; and the small number of Members present was a proof that they did not mean to give it any opposition. He could not, consistent with his duty, and the public service, postpone the business farther, and gentlemen might have an opportunity of debating it on the Report.

Mr. RASHLEIGH, after having apologized for not being accustomed to address the House, animadverted on the bill, which he said, was so inexplicable in its nature as to require much serious deliberation. He trusted the right honourable gentleman would

postpone it, if it were only for two days, and concluded by moving an amendment, that the report of the amendments should be deferred to Friday next.

Mr. MARTIN complained of the thinness of the House. The bill in its operation, he remarked, would reach to the Principality of Wales, and as many respectable gentlemen of that country were enjoying themselves in celebrating the anniversary of their titular Saint, he hoped this circumstance would have some influence in obliging them to agree to the motion of the honourable gentleman who spoke last.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that he was extremely happy to hear, that the gentlemen of the Principality of Wales were indulging themselves at their annual festival. They were enjoying themselves at their ease, which was a sufficient proof that they considered themselves not much interested in the present bill. There were, however, many eminent lawyers connected with that Principality attending in their places, and who would take effectual care that nothing should be done to affect their interests. He therefore persevered in his intention of not postponing the farther consideration of the bill.

The amendment was negatived.

The amendments of the Committee were read a second time, and the bill was re-committed.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL suggested some amendments respecting the stamps on the receipts for the payment of the tax on legacies. The tax would render it necessary that the legacy should be recorded in a book, which, as was the case in apprentices' indentures, might occasionally serve as legal proof of the transaction. He thought no other stamp duty should be charged on the receipt than that which was to be enacted by the new bill. These, together with some verbal amendments, were all that he had to propose.

Mr. JODDREL wished to know if any additional officers were to be employed in the collection of this tax.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said, the officers already engaged in the collection of His Majesty's stamp revenues would be able to collect the present duty also.

The clauses being gone through, and the Speaker having resumed the chair, on the question that the report be now received,

Mr. Alderman NEWNHAM expressed his strong disapprobation of the bill. It would oblige people to disclose the whole state of their private property. Every man's warehouse must be examined, and the books in his counting-house inspected. The state of the property of every mercantile house must be exposed to the world



when any partner happened to die, and left his property among relations. This was a proceeding that might prove highly prejudicial to the best established houses. The tax was an unpopular one; so many difficulties presented themselves in the way of its execution, that if the House agreed to it, a repeal would soon be found absolutely necessary. Exempting landed property, and making mercantile property alone subject to this bill, he considered an aggravation of its oppression. He entreated, and he trusted the Ministers would give it up altogether.

Mr. Chancellor PITT, though unwilling to enter into any such like discussion in the present stage of the bill, could not allow what had fallen from the worthy Alderman to pass without some observations, as loose expressions in that House might make a very unfavorable impression, if suffered to pass unnoticed. It neither was intended by this bill that the state of the warehouses and counting-house merchants should be examined and exposed to the Public, nor was it intended that landed property should be exempt from the tax. In the first case, if the bill were attended to, it would be found that the tax would be collected without the inspection and exposure of private property; and with regard to the second, it had been found most convenient to divide it into two distinct bills, the tax on mercantile, and the tax on landed property. The principle of the bill, he therefore contended, was of a very different nature from what the Alderman apprehended, and he trusted he would more nicely examine it before it again came before the House, and he had no doubt he would then form a very different opinion.

It was then ordered, that the report be taken into consideration on Friday next.—Adjourned.

*Wednesday, 2d March.*

General MACLEOD gave notice, that on Monday the next instant, he would make a motion respecting the mode of war carried on against the Maroons.—The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 3d March.*

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON moved that the acts of Parliament of the 13th and 14th of his present Majesty, which relate to the regulation of turn-pike roads be read; which being done, he observed that broad wheels to carriages of very great weight were extremely useful, because they were less prejudicial to the roads than those which went upon narrow wheels. That in consequence of some restrictions that were laid on these carriages, in the course of which was held over them, and the manner in which they were

regulated by weighing machines, great inconveniences had arisen, and especially on those roads that approach the metropolis. He had in view to remedy these inconveniences; and therefore he moved for leave to bring in a bill to explain and amend the said acts. He meant to confine the operation of his regulations to those parts of the roads within five miles of the metropolis.

Mr. BYNG said, he should not oppose this measure, because he was aware that many considerable inconveniences had been felt near the metropolis in consequence of what the worthy Alderman had stated; but he hoped that this bill would not be proceeded in without giving due notice of it to the commissioners.

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON said, that due notice should certainly be given to the commissioners; and he also meant to propose that this bill be printed.

Leave given to bring in the bill.

Sir. WATKINS LEWES moved that the Act of Parliament for regulating the militia of the city of London, be read; which being done, he observed, that this act was inadequate to the purpose for which it was intended: it was conceived, that by it His Majesty was empowered to call out the militia in that city as in other places; but, on referring to the highest law authorities, it was found that the Crown had no such power by the present bill. The object was, that such power should be given to His Majesty; and therefore he should move for leave to bring in a bill, to explain and amend, and consolidate into one, two Acts of Parliament for the better regulating the militia of the city of London, &c.

Mr. Alderman LE MESURIER said a few words in favour of the motion; after which leave was given to bring in a bill.

General SMITH called for the order of the day on the abolition of the slave trade.

Mr. WILBERFORCE observed, that he was much obliged to the honourable gentleman for his readiness to come forward upon this occasion, the more because this was a favour not usually conferred. It had been the general custom to leave to the direction of the mover of a bill, the conduct of its stages through the House. What reason the honourable gentleman had to depart from this custom, what had decided him to behave in this manner to-day, it was out of his power to say. It was, however, matter of perfect surprise to him. He lamented that this subject should be brought on so abruptly, so early in the day, and when many of the most able and leading characters in the House were not present. But he should use the House very ill if he attempted to make a long speech

merely to protract the discussion of the subject, and therefore should make no other observation at present.

The SPEAKER then observed, that the question was that the order of the day be now read.

General SMITH said, he did not mean to do any thing that was ungentlemanly. But he had been waiting in the House some time. He meant to give this bill every opposition he could. The honourable gentleman who brought it in had said repeatedly that he would renew his application to the House on this subject until he should succeed in his object, or be compelled by the House to desist. General Smith professed it to be his object to stop the bill in its present stage. He was acting in conformity to that intention, and therefore he was a little surprised that the honourable gentleman should think he treated him disrespectfully, merely because he opposed him. He was rather inclined to impute the honourable gentleman's present temper to his apprehension for the fate of his bill, than to any other cause.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR observed that there was certainly nothing disorderly or irregular in the honourable gentleman's calling for the order of the day. But he submitted to him whether this was quite a candid mode of proceeding? This was a great and important question. It should be discussed in a full House, and in the presence of those members, who, from their talents and situation, were justly esteemed to be best qualified to deliver their opinions. He was not complaining that this proceeding was irregular: on the contrary, he admitted it to be strictly in order, but he submitted the candour of it to the farther consideration of the honourable General. Should the subject be decided when the House was so indifferently attended, he could hardly say, in the language of common sense (although in order he must) that the decision was the sense of the House of Commons.

The SPEAKER then put the question, "That the order of the day be now read;" and the yeas seeming to have it, he observed that if the question for reading the order should be negatived, the subject could not be brought on again to-day, upon which the order was agreed to be read.

It being read,

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON presented a petition from the West-India merchants and planters against the bill; which, was ordered to be laid on the table, and also that the petitioners be heard by themselves or counsel, on the third reading of the bill, if they shall think fit.



Mr. WILBERFORCE then moved, that the bill for the abolition of the slave trade, be now read a second time.

General TARLETON moved an amendment, that instead of the word "now," be substituted the words, "this day three months."

Sir WILLIAM YOUNGE thought the amendment was wise and temperate, and at this time highly expedient, under all the circumstances of the case.

Mr. WILBERFORCE observed, that this was a question which had been very much agitated, and the opinion of the House more than once solemnly pronounced upon it. He was in hopes that the second reading, like the first, would have passed unopposed, as the principle of the bill had been already admitted by the House, and that the only discussion should be in the Committee on the clauses. If gentlemen still thought it would be improper to pass it at this time, they might assign their reasons upon the question for the third reading. He advised the House to reflect on what might be the consequence out of that House, if the people should perceive that this bill was thus hastily and unjustly rejected.

The House divided—for the amendment 31; for the second reading 64. The bill was then read a second time.

Mr. WILBERFORCE moved that it be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

General SMITH objected to so early a day. He said that the friends of this bill should meet the question fairly, and give a fair opportunity of opposing it. He should give it every opposition in his power, because he was convinced of its dangerous tendency. He had no idea of these new lights that tended to pull down all that had been approved of for a century.

The bill was then ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

Mr. DENT gave notice, that in consequence of the uncandid manner in which the bill for the abolition of the slave trade had been carried on to-day, he should, when the report came to be considered (if it should ever be reported, and he hoped it never would), move for leave to bring in a bill to repeal all such Acts of Parliament as have authorised and encouraged the slave trade in our colonies.

*Friday, March 4th.*

Mr. CURWEN. Sir, I now rise, to have the honour of submitting to the House a motion for the repeal of all the prohibitory statutes relative to game, and for leave to substitute provisions in their place, for the more effectual preservation and security of the

same. When I first intimated my intention of bringing this matter before the House, I had fixed upon a distant period, to have allowed full time for the thorough investigation of a subject, rendered extremely complex by the number, as well as the contradictory statutes which still remain in force, as also to avail myself of the general sentiments and wishes of gentlemen upon the business. In the instance of many respectable persons both in and out of the House, I have been induced to depart from my first intention, to bring this question immediately before this House, flattered by the sanguine expectation of its meeting a pretty general concurrence. I am well aware of the prejudices, which every considerable change has to encounter. First, from such as are enemies to all reform, and secondly, from those who, though no friends to the game laws, are fearful their abolition would prove the destruction of the game. Before I enter into any farther discussion, I must declare, if I have received any thing in this measure could have such a tendency, in the smallest degree, to render the residence of gentlemen in the country less pleasant, or in any ways interfere with their amusements, I should have thought I did an injury, rather than a benefit to the community by my motion; sensible that the residence of gentlemen in the country is a most desirable object, and tends much to the happiness of the bulk of the people, could I suppose, what I am about to offer, would in the smallest degree interfere with any inducement to gentlemen's spending their time and fortunes in the country, instead of moving for the repeal of the game laws, I should have contented myself with offering a modification of the law, content even to sacrifice something of justice to so desirable an end. Sir, I protest I have the most sanguine expectations, and the earliest conviction in my own mind, that if the House should adopt my proposition I shall have the honour to make to them, it will greatly increase the quantity of game, prevent those unfortunate misunderstandings that but too frequently interrupt the peace and harmony of neighbours, and at the same time removing the odium which the present tyranny of the game laws, and unjustifiable monopolies occasions, unite every landholder in the wish to preserve and promote the game. Of so long standing, and so deep rooted are the prejudices entertained of the injustice and tyranny of the game laws, that it appears impossible to confound them with any of those principles the alarm of which so powerfully haunts the imagination of the gentlemen of the present moment; had I occasion for stronger proof than what every gentleman's own knowledge and observation would furnish as to the general execration in which the game laws have long been held, I might cite that great constitutional law

Sir William Blackstone, who represents their tyranny as little short of the forest laws, and repugnant to every principle of justice. Sir, it would have been impossible for laws, so contradictory to the spirit and principle of the English Constitution, to have existed at this time of day, had they been carried into general execution; sufficient instances have occurred to keep up the resentment of the country, but not sufficient to call forth the united voice of the nation for their repeal. Sir, it is the boast of Englishmen to hold their liberty as a right, not as a boon. If the laws be such as they cannot, ought not to be executed, does it become the legislature to suffer them to remain upon our statute book? A security from oppression that rests upon forbearance, is not a situation under which nineteen hundred and ninety-nine out of two thousand, or even a greater proportion, of Englishmen should be suffered to remain. Sir, it was accounted wise policy in former statesmen to attend to the changes which time and circumstances produced, and to alter and adopt the laws, to meet the exigences of the moment. Our present system seems the very reverse, and without adverting to the astonishing revolution of the public mind, we appear solely occupied by means of harsh restrictions, and increased severity of penal statutes, to keep things up to the standard of former opinions; Sir, so wide, so extended is the diffusion of knowledge through almost every country in Europe, that such Governments, and such laws, as are not calculated honestly and fairly to promote the general ends of all Government, the happiness and prosperity of the people at large, will be submitted to with reluctance, and can only be supported by force; a weak reliance against the collective body of the people, and never to be depended upon. However harsh such opinions may be in the ears of some gentlemen, and, however we may wish to shut our eyes against them, they are too much founded in truth to be denied. So circumstanced, every motive of wisdom and policy should call upon us to recind a system of laws that violate every principle of justice. Happy, indeed, Sir, would it have been for this country, had we avoided a war justly entitled a war of despots, in which a King and people of England have no common cause. Happy would it have been, had we spent the lavish expenditure of so much blood and treasure, and carefully employed ourselves in a serious investigation of the causes which produced the calamities which have desolated a neighbouring country. Rendered wise by their misfortunes, had we in good earnest set about reforming the abuses which are felt and complained of in our own Government. Proud might we then have been to court, instead of assiduously endeavouring to stifle, a display of public sentiment; needless would

it have been to nail up the mouths of the people: Having removed every just cause of complaint, we should have had the best security human wisdom can afford: the conviction of the people that their interest and prosperity were concerned, in the defence and support of the Government. A review of our penal statutes, would have brought before the House the question, which I have now the honour to submit to them. For upwards of seven hundred years the game laws have been a constant source of grievance and complaint to this kingdom. What I have to propose, will have nothing of novelty or innovation. It is simply to restore to the landholders the game, that which the tyranny and usurpation of William the Conqueror robbed them of; with the Norman conquest came the game laws, amongst other innovations of oppression and injustice. The laws established now, for the first time, for the protection of the game, are so severe and tyrannical, that it is impossible to consider them without the strongest emotions of horror and indignation. Good God, Sir, that it could ever enter into the head or heart of a man, to contemplate in the same point of view, and punish equally criminal the murder of a fellow creature, and the killing of a miserable deer. To what a degraded, contemptible, wretched state must the inhabitants of this island have been reduced, to content themselves with complaining for one hundred and fifty years of the atrocity of such laws! The Carta de Foresta granted in 1225 mitigated the severity of the punishment of the game laws, and disfranchised many of the forests. It was considered as an acquisition on the part of the subject, as little inferior to Magna Charta itself. The laws from this period to the first prohibitory statute, made in 13th Richard II. 1389, seem to have principally in view the disarming the people. It may not here be improper to advert to the doctrine advanced by Sir William Blackstone and others, of the right of the Crown to the sole property in game, either as feudal Lord of the whole soil, or in right of the prerogative of the Crown to all things which have no owner. As generally as this doctrine has been received, I am strongly inclined to the opinion of a learned and ingenious commentator on Sir William Blackstone (I mean Professor Christian) who has, I think, with the most complete success refuted this opinion, and shewn clearly the Crown had no such right. Lord Chief Justice Coke has delivered himself strongly to the same effect. That the licence of the Crown was necessary for the erection of parks and warrens, but that every man might pursue hunting and hawking as a matter of pastime and amusement. The statute of the 13th Richard II. confirms the general right, and only narrows the exercise of it to persons possessed of 40s. p.

annum, and clergymen with benefices of 10l. ; and this on the ground that servants and others misemployed their time in the pursuit of game. The statute of the 11th of Henry VII., restrains the killing of game on any man's freehold against his consent, under a very severe penalty. The prohibition of Richard II. continued without alteration till the 1st of James I., when they were increased to ten pounds freehold, thirty pounds leasehold, or two hundred pounds in chattels, sons of esquires, and persons of higher degree. The intermediate laws relate chiefly to restrictions respecting arms, and breathe the same spirit of tyranny and oppression which characterises every law relative to this subject; the statute of the 11th of Henry VII. excepted, which guards to every freeholder the game upon his own property. By the 22d and 23d of Charles II. the qualifications are advanced to 100l. freehold, and 150l. leasehold, and persons of certain degree; but all qualification from personal property was omitted. This is a period of our history from which neither sound policy, nor a scrupulous attention to the interest or liberty of the subject is to be looked for. In a country whose very existence depends upon commerce, any insidious distinction between the landholder and the commercial interest, was unwise and unjust, and so even upon the principles of the restrictions themselves, which profess to have in view no other object but the prevention of improper people mispending their time, to the injury of themselves and the public. Sir, to the subject of prohibitions, I wish principally to call the attention of the House. The tyranny and injustice of restraining any individual in the exercise of a right, at the arbitrary and unconfined pleasure of the legislature, can be justified upon no principle, nor defended upon any policy. Sir, it is a complete system of monopoly of a few, upon the right of three parts of the landed interest, as I shall presently shew.—I know of no particular quality that gives to the possessor of an estate of 100l. a right, that might not with as much or more propriety be given to one of a less value. Extent of estates depend so greatly upon local situation, that a property of an hundred pounds per annum, may be but a few acres on which no game is bred, and whilst an estate of half the value in a distant part, may be of considerable extent, rear and feed a quantity of game, and yet the owner must not touch it, under penalties that may be so exercised as to fall little short of his ruin. Sir, if prescriptions might be pleaded, the game was from the earliest period considered as the right of the proprietor of land, and the first restriction seems to have been directed against persons, who could not follow it without evident ruin to themselves. The



law prevents any man from going upon the property of another, and yet restrains him from the enjoyment of what is the produce of it much as the grain. The impolicy of this restriction is only exceeded by its injustice, and nothing could operate more forcibly to defeat the object it has in view, the preservation of the game. The harshness and tyranny of these laws inspire so general a disgust and abhorrence in the minds of all who are subject to them, that it induces a very large proportion of landholders to take every means to destroy the game. Add to this what is suffered by feeding as well as by the pursuit of the game, and it will cease to surprize gentlemen that the game is so diminished. Sir, from the earliest period of game laws, statutes have been made to prevent the destruction of eggs. Whilst it is the interest of the farmer to extirpate the game which can be done with impunity in defiance of any thing that tyranny can devise, it is in vain to hope it will not be done. Sir, I cannot but lament when a right honourable gentleman selected game as the object of taxation, which I am inclined to believe he might borrow the hint of from Russia—that he had not accompanied it with the same measures which attended its introduction into that country where, for once, taxation was the parent of liberty, and produced the total abolition of the game laws. It is singular that one of the most despotic and absolute Governments in Europe should have been the first to have put an end to a system which had been a source of such oppression and tyranny, while they yet remain a disgrace to the country which claims a pre-eminence in liberty and freedom.

The right honourable gentleman's tax does away all necessary restrictions, and puts it out of the power of persons who might injure themselves and the Public by mispending their time in pursuing the game. By the product of this tax we may form some estimate of what proportion of landed interest has a concern in the preservation and protection of the game. The amount of the tax is little more than forty thousand pounds, which, after deducting what may be supposed to be paid by gamekeepers, there may be twelve thousand persons who take out licences. Allow to each of these persons an estate of five hundred pounds per annum, and we shall find six millions to be the property that monopolizes the game, just one fourth of the whole. Sir, though I believe this to exceed the real state of the fact, it is sufficient for my purpose to allow double that sum. I suppose the interest to be equally divided—what then, Sir, must be the consequence, when we make it equally the interest of every proprietor to protect the game? I think, Sir, I am well founded in supposing that the repeal of these laws will amply repay the sportsman by an abundant increase of his spoil; it may, indeed, call upon

to lay out something of what he now pays for the guarding of game or the permission to shoot on the property of other persons—the strictest preservation of his own will no longer be considered as odious and oppressive. Sir, a worthy and respectable friend of mine has long practised a mode of protecting the game which has answered every purpose, that is by the payment of so much for every head of game to the person on whose estate the game is killed. A conduct so liberal has interested every farmer in the protection of the game, and the honourable gentleman enjoys his sport with the good wishes of the people, who, so far from envying him his amusements, concur as far as they can to promote them. Contrast this with the conduct of those, who, by the terror of the laws, endeavour to protect the game. The odium and ill will defeat the purpose, and never fails in the long run, to disgust those who attempt it. The next point I beg to call the attention of the House is, to that clause which empowers one Magistrate (by former statutes it required two) to grant warrants to search houses of persons suspected of having dogs, nets, &c. on belief of the intention to use the same. How it was possible at any period since this country set up a claim to liberty, that such an enactment could pass this House, is matter of astonishment. A law more tyrannical and oppressive never was devised, except by a subsequent statute which extends this power to gamekeepers, who may seize any dog, and net, and enter any house he may suspect; a power, perhaps, not often used from prudential reasons, as the other method puts in the power of persons to exercise the tyranny without risque. Sir, to put a case by no means extreme—Supposing the Lord Mayor of London should by accident be found upon the manor of a strict preserver of game, though able to contribute millions to a loan, if not possessed of a hundred pounds per annum in land, his dog might be seized with impunity and hanged before his face. Vain is the boast that every man's house is his castle; it may be violated upon suspicion of any unfeeling instrument of this despotism. Sir, it once fell to my lot to be obliged to grant a warrant upon this statute, and though no proof of usage was attempted, the dog, being of a prohibited species, was taken from the proprietor and hanged.—I have no words that can convey the detestation I feel for this act. The other enactments for punishing the killing of game are mild indeed to those now in force. By the 5th of Ann, the law professes the punishment to be no more than five pounds, or three months imprisonment; but by the mode it leaves to the option of the prosecutor to recover this penalty, it amounts to imprisonment for life. Thus, offences, that have no shade of distinction, according to the more or less feeling of the pro-

secutor, are, as I stated before, punished by five pounds; recover before a Magistrate, or swelled to sixty or seventy pounds by a prosecution in the Courts of Westminster. What can be more unreasonable than to leave to the party injured, the nature of the punishment which he chuses to inflict? Bad in all cases, but terrible indeed when it tends to the imprisonment of a subject for life. Too many have found their way into our prisons from the oppressive nature of the laws. It is high time they should be erased from our statute book, nor longer be suffered to insult the first principles of our Constitution to which, in every instance, they are in direct opposition. What I have yet farther to state to the House is matter of mere regulation and policy; should the House adopt my proposition, and restore to every landholder the game upon his own property, would it be consistent to prescribe to him the way in which he should enjoy it? The game being once under the protection of every proprietor of land, cannot be invaded without increased risques; and yet, in a country so opulent as this, persons of a certain situation, adverting to the consequences, will hold out temptations by giving extravagant prices for game. Persons will be induced to run great risques. Would it not therefore be better to let game come freely and openly to market—the price will be so reduced, as of itself to destroy the temptation to poaching, the risque of detection considerably increased.—For pass this law, and it will be no longer difficult to convict the poacher. The nature of the crime will be changed, and what was considered as only an attack upon the pastime monopoly of a few, will be an offence against every individual, like all others, make it a common interest to punish and prevent. I would appeal to the candour of gentlemen, whether the most inveterate enemy of the poacher at home, does not consider him a very useful friend in any other quarter. I do not know which of us has not, in some way or other, contributed to the breach of this law. Is it just—Is it consistent with humanity, to suffer laws to exist which we are ourselves the cause of tempting men to break, and which lead to worse consequences. Sir, does it become us to require fifty times as much to be entitled to kill a Partridge as to exercise the most boasted prerogative of Englishmen—the right of chusing their own representatives? It is high time, after above seven hundred years of oppression and tyranny, to put an end to laws which have never, during the whole course of that period, been considered by the nation without execration and abhorrence—not more than forty thousand persons in the kingdom are exempted from their tyranny. Sir, my first view of the subject inclined me to stop here, and leave every man to defend his property by an action at law.



ut, Sir, a farther consideration of the subject shewed me I should have done little for that part of the community for whose rights I am contending—An action in the hands of men of property is a ready and efficacious remedy—but totally out of their power to yield without bringing ruin upon themselves. Fortunately for me, without introducing any thing new, an adequate and complete remedy presented itself in the statute of the 11th Henry VIIth: what I shall now offer to the House, as a substitute for the laws I propose to repeal in the renewal of that act with certain modifications. First, I should propose, that any person who should kill any kind of game after a discharge verbal or in writing from the tenant or any person entitled to the game, should be subject to a penalty of five pounds for every head of game so killed, to be paid on conviction, or committed for one month to the house of correction for the first offence, and six months for every subsequent; one half the penalty to the informer, the other moiety to the occupier, with power to appeal to the sessions, their decision to be final. Sir, simple as this plan is, it appears to me it would answer every purpose of protecting the game, and prevent a practice ill-becoming those who are too often guilty of it, of continuing to shoot after a discharge, relying that as the expence of prosecution for a first trespass must fall equally upon both the injurer and the injured, they may do it with impunity. It is not one of the least beneficial effects likely to follow the plan I propose, that it will put an end to the frequent disagreements that are occasioned by game, and leave every person to pursue his sports without interruption or molestation. To the rights of Lords of Manors, and others, I have forbore saying any thing. When the right of taking game does exist, it is not my intention to interfere with it—and I should propose to guard the wastes to such only as are now entitled to shoot there. Sir, I trust the tyranny and injustice of these laws will be sufficient grounds alone for the House to agree to the repeal of them; if any thing farther were requisite, their inexpediency and impolicy might be pleaded. I am sorry so long to have trespassed on the House; I shall only add, if the bill be suffered to be brought in, I should be glad to meet the wishes of gentlemen, and model accordingly; let the laws be equal, and I have nothing to object. The regulations which attach equally upon all are left as they were. I now move you, Sir, for the repeal of the 22d and 23d of Charles II.—1st of James I.—4th and 5th of William and Mary—5th and 9th of Ann—28th of George II.—and also to substitute other provisions for the more effectual security and preservation of the game.

Mr. BUXTON was of opinion, that the game laws, as they at present stood, were the subject of much deserved reprehension,

but he could not altogether agree with the honourable gentleman in his views. He thought that the game ought to be made property. He wished that the honourable gentleman had gone a little higher in his history of the game laws. If he had, he would have found, that before the Norman conquest game was private property, and that it was recognized as such by the Roman law, which provides that no man has a right to kill game on another's property. Every law, he said, which does not equally affect the rich and the poor, is not a just law. And in this view he reprobated the present laws, for it was notorious that a poor man was oftener fined five pounds for killing a partridge, than a rich man twenty shillings for killing a hare. He would be understood, however, as not wishing to increase the penalty, but merely to equalize the operations of the law. He was not one of those who wished for sudden changes in any ancient system. He wished, before the existing laws were repealed, that some substitutes should be provided to supply the place of the game, and that the honourable gentleman, before he pressed the repeal of the present laws, would bring forward a plan which might be discussed, and lie open for the inspection of members till next session.

Mr. FRANCIS professed not to be much acquainted with the subject, but as he considered it as of great importance, he wished to leave to make a few observations; and if he was not so well qualified as others to speak, perhaps from having no interest to support, he might not be the less impartial. He could not conceive how the honourable gentleman (Mr. Buxton) could make game private property, and not make the penalty attending on an infringement of the law, the same that he would make a penalty for the violation of any other kind of property. There was one principle which the Legislature ought always to keep in view in their deliberations, which he rose principally for the sake of stating. He was not a sportsman himself, but he wished that the game should be preserved for the sake of sportsmen. To discourage poachers, therefore, was certainly very important. But the reason why he was particularly desirous for the preservation of game was, that while the country presented so many attractions as it did at present to country gentlemen, and that while it was of so much consequence to the country that they should reside for some time on their estates, he was anxious that the country should present as many temptations as possible to invite them to their rural retreats. He hoped, therefore, that shooting was a favourite amusement with many gentlemen, and that his honourable friend who made the motion, would provide that their sport should not be interrupted. He was induced to mention this by an idea which had been suggested to him, that if his hon-

able friend's plan was carried into effect, that property would be so dispersed and interspersed, there would be no sporting at all.

Mr. H. MAJOR was of opinion, that the consideration of the game laws should go to a Committee of the whole House.

Mr. JOLLIFFE could not consent to the destruction of the whole fabrick of the game laws, unless some specific remedy was substituted in its place. He thought the total ruin of the game would be the result of so improvident a measure, and would oppose the introduction of the bill.

Mr. POWYS agreed with the honourable gentleman who proposed the introduction of the bill, in most of his sentiments on the subject; but thought his motion was not calculated to obtain the object he had in view. He did not approve of repealing the statutes, without substituting others of a salutary nature in their room. If, therefore, the honourable gentleman would move for a Committee to inquire into the state of the game laws, he would give his assent to the measure, but he felt himself obliged to oppose his motion, as it held out nothing specific for the consideration of the House.

Mr. WINDHAM said, that he was, as well as his honourable friend (Mr. Francis) an impartial speaker, for, being no sportsman, he had no interest in the game laws as they touched the mere butchery of partridges. He was no friend to the spirit of those laws, and to a general inquiry into them he would have no objection.—Though even on an inquiry he would wish for more time to see what they should substitute for those parts they might prune away. The objections he had ever heard made to those laws were, that they were an invidious code—a system made for one class alone, and for the protection of amusement. These considerations produced a feeling which prevented people from thinking a breach of those laws equally criminal as a violation of others.—The consequence was, that men were more apt to break them, and that habit led them to violate others; afterwards the practice of poaching led to crimes, which were greatly injurious to the public, and often fatal to the transgressors themselves. Perhaps there was no effectual means of preventing poaching but by repealing the game laws; but it was to be first well considered, whether the repeal would remedy the evils complained of, without going farther. If a penalty was annexed, men would still act on the same feelings, and be as unwilling to enforce it. If no penalty was annexed, the question was, whether it would not go to extinguish the whole game of the country. Perhaps that would be no great evil; but the observation of his honourable friend (Mr. Francis) was an important point of consideration, viz. the propriety of preserving an inducement to

men of fortune to make their estates in the country their places of residence ; and this single circumstance might instruct gentlemen, who are fond of changing laws, in how many unforeseen collateral points society might be affected by a change, in its direct view, simple and salutary. He wished that no sudden or sweeping change should be adopted. On the point of invasion of rights he could not agree with what had been stated as an encroachment. The simple fact of establishing qualifications in this instance was no more an encroachment on right, than many other institutions and qualifications to which no man would think of objecting. Indeed, there were very few institutions that were not necessarily clogged with qualifications of one kind or other—the objection, on the score of right therefore, was mere fanciful, imaginary language ; for supposing, as in the case of game, a property, which without restraining laws, could not be preserved—there then was a right to make provisions, or else the object would be lost. In the case of air or water, of which there can be no fear of extinction, no laws are necessary, and therefore to make them property would be wrong ; but if the object is subject to extinction, it must be guarded by law, taking care that the right parted with, and the penalty, do not exceed the value of the object preserved. To the other principle laid down, that it was a violation of the rights of those wealthy men who from the nature of their property were excluded from the use of game, he had the same objection ; he had often heard it, and always thought it weak—as well might it be said that strength gave a right to wealth, as that wealth gave a right to use game. He wished for a modification of the game laws, but upon all general principles he felt a very great repugnance to accede to any sudden change in any ancient system.

Mr. FOX hoped, that there would be no opposition to the view of his honourable friend in this stage of the business. He would not now offend the right honourable gentleman's (Mr. Windham) ears with any discussion upon the doctrine of natural right. There was certainly nothing inconsistent in certain privileges being attached to one sort of property and not attached to another ; but there was certainly an incongruity in the idea of any laws conferring a privilege, when in reality, they were the instruments of a grievance. It was notorious, that the game laws were broken ; that the rich were accessory to the violation ; and that poor men would always be found to procure game for the rich, by unlawful means, while the rich were anxious for game, and willing to overlook the means by which it was procured. It was stated, that from poaching, men are gradually led to the commission of greater crimes. But from

did this tendency arise, but from the texture of the present laws?—Men were induced to poach, because they did not consider it as a crime; and after violating the laws in one shape, they would not scruple to break them in another. Those laws, Mr. Fox, are the wisest, when the influence of moral instinct goes pace with the influence of the laws; not when an attempt is made to over-rule the dictates of moral instinct by legal authority. The question at present was, whether the advantage gained by the game laws was sufficient to counterbalance the evil incurred in procuring that advantage? It was urged, and he allowed that it was done with justice, that gentlemen ought to have sporting amusement; but this certainly ought to give way to any serious evil incurred in procuring this amusement. He was not, however, under the necessity of opposing evil to evil; for it was generally allowed, those who had the best opportunity of information, that the present game laws, instead of increasing, tend to diminish the opportunity and the fund of amusement. He could not but remark by way of example, that it was somewhat singular, that all the sportsmen should support the proposition of his honourable friend, and that those who were supposed to be unacquainted with the subject, should oppose it. For his own part, he was clearly of opinion, that game should be private property. But at present they had three alternatives, either that the game laws should remain as they are, that game should become private property, or that the game laws should be repealed. After having stated what was his opinion, he had no difficulty in saying, that he wished much rather that the game laws should be repealed without any substitute, than that they should remain as they are. There was one thing which had not been sufficiently pressed, and which he begged to remind the House, that a principle of tyranny ran through the whole code. Such was the principle; the practice running out of them was equally obnoxious; for the penalties sued must be solicited by parties who were generally too much influenced by animosity to the party against whom they sue. Nor was it always quite a clear case that the magistrate who pronounced conviction was quite impartial. The whole of the system was a mass of insufferable tyranny—such as none had cared to defend in a direct way. If gentlemen chused to assert that the game laws tended to protect the game, he would answer them directly, that he did no such thing. He would ask any person conversant with the subject, whether in point of fact, where game is preserved, it was not from the law of property, and not from the game laws; and he was sure it was owing to the law of property, and not to the



game laws, that game was preserved. Where had game been preserved, except where the holder of the land was the proprietor of it, and had the right by law to kill game? Had it been where the holder of the land was not the proprietor, and had not the right to kill game? He would say again, that the preservation of the game, was entirely owing to the proprietors of land and not to the game laws, and therefore it was the principal property which protected the game. He spoke confidently on this subject, and he was glad he spoke in the hearing of many who knew the matter better than he did. But what was the proposition of his honourable friend? Only that a penalty of 5*l.* on a person who should, after notice, trespass on the land of another and kill game there. He thought that game should be made private property. That was his opinion. He knew that the prejudices of men were a long time in wearing out, and that was a very much to be considered, and great care taken of it; for would it be an easy thing to make the public regard game in a field in the same light as any other property? To conquer that prejudice would require time, and the House might consider of that hereafter. But the question here was, whether the House would not agree to bring in a bill, to repeal laws which no man in the House defended in principle? Why not agree then to the introduction of the bill, and when it went to a Committee, propose some substitution of these laws? But, although this was his opinion, yet the question was not so pressing or so urgent that the House should not have time to consider it. That the game laws are really mischievous and create crimes; that they increase the number of offences against themselves, and thereby increase the number of persons who are ready to commit other crimes, could not possibly admit of a degree of doubt. He should hope, therefore, that the bill should pass. He was perfectly sure, that the game laws are not good for the preservation of the game. It seemed to be agreed that they were bad for that purpose: they could therefore be kept on, if they were kept) for the sake of the invidious distinction which they establish.

Mr. RYDER opposed Mr. Curwen's motion, on the ground that without allowing opportunity for due discussion, it went to repeal an ancient system of laws, without proposing any substitute. Respect to our ancestors demanded more deliberation, than attention to abolish a system established and long acted upon. Deference to their opinion, and the importance of the system both required any alteration of so general an extent should be first considered in a Committee of the whole House.

Mr. GREY had little to add upon the general question, after his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) had advanced. He did not but observe, however, how differently they proceeded on various occasions, in point of respect for the institutions of their ancestors.

The honourable gentleman was cautious of touching anything which they had handed down. The caution he allowed to stand. But when an honourable friend of his (Mr. Whitbread) moved for a Committee to inquire into the state of the poor laws, the motion was negatived, and a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Curwen) took the business out of his hands, and without the formality of any inquiry, moved for leave to bring in a bill to new-model an ancient system. He heartily wished the right honourable gentleman's project success; and, perhaps, it had fallen into hands, in which from a superiority of influence, it would thrive better than it could have done in any other. He was one of those who was much obliged to his honourable friend, for submitting to the House the motion which he had brought forward this evening. The length of time during which the nation was suffered to groan under a vexatious and tyrannical institutions, was to him a reason why they should exist no longer, and he wished Mr. Curwen to accede to what appeared to be the wish of the House, and rather move for a Committee to inquire into the state of the game laws. For he composed a system which ought to be seriously discussed, and the effect of such discussion must infallibly be that they could not suffer any longer to subsist.

Mr. WILBERFORCE defended the Chancellor of the Exchequer from the animadversion made by Mr. Grey, and contended, that what was intended to be done respecting the poor, was a reform and not an innovation. The plan of which the Minister had sketched out to the House, was to restore them to the state they were in at the reign of Queen Anne, so far as it was applicable to our present situation. The additions which were made since the reign of Queen Anne, by destroying the simplicity of the original system introduced these corrupt alterations, which caused all the abuses and corruptions so very justly complained of. As to himself, he must confess, that the system of the game laws was long held by him in the utmost abhorrence, and sooner than let them remain in their present state, he would readily vote, even for their unqualified abolition. But in applying a remedy, the House must have some regard to long existing prejudices, and it would be right to give sufficient time for full and mature deliberation. There were only three lines of conduct hitherto suggested—either to abolish the laws

altogether, which might in fact, produce the immediate and total destruction of game in this country. The second mode was to make them private property, which to him appeared the best, though it may not have any moral effect upon the poachers, who would still have the same incentives which they have now for continuing their practices. The third, but by far the worst method was to let the laws remain in their present situation. He should prefer submitting the subject to the attention of a Committee; if it came to a question, he would give his vote in favour of the present situation.

Mr. JENKINSON said, that although he considered the present laws in an objectionable point of view, yet he was averse to any alteration taking place in a system so long established, especially at a time like the present, when every deviation from legal custom ought scrupulously to be guarded against. He did not see what advantage could be derived from making game private property; the same temptation to poachers as now existed would still continue. Unless it was proved to him that grievances existed under the present code of game laws, he should oppose any change taking place in them; and even if abuses could be pointed out, he should not vote for a repeal of the present regulations, unless he found a practical and specific remedy proposed for them. He admitted that the principle of the laws was somewhat oppressive, but he believed they had been followed up in practice with as much lenity as the system was capable of admitting. Wishing, therefore, that game not only should be preserved, but preserved expressly for gentlemen, that their inducements to residence in the country may not be diminished; and being conscious that the objects in view could only be accomplished by a total abolition, in order to get rid of the question, he moved that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. CURWEN replied to several of the objections made to the motion, which he saw no reason for withdrawing. His intention was not to press such a measure hastily through the House, but that the bill should be received, to move for its being referred to a Committee. After that it might be printed, so as to afford gentlemen an opportunity to take it with them to the country, and in the ensuing session of Parliament be fully prepared for the discussion. He expressed much surprise at Mr. Jenkinson's admission of the laws in their present state appearing somewhat oppressive. Let him examine them again, and see if in the most despotic government ever afflicted or disgraced the world, there were any laws to be found more unjust or more tyrannical. It was in vain to differ



this was not a time when governments could securely sport the rights and liberties of the people, or when the people were used to respect or obey any laws that were calculated to oppress, instead of being made for their advantage. Compulsion and force may obtain temporary submission; but when once the people had their voice, those tyrannical laws must fall before the terror of a revolution. Happy would it have been for us if we had taken warning by the dreadful dissolution we were witnesses of in a neighbouring Government; and if, instead of entering upon a ruinous and unsuccessful war, we had looked around us for a remedy to the grievances existing at home. That remedy must inevitably come, and it may perhaps be prudent in that House not to appear so slow or so unwilling to produce it.

Mr. FOX, in answer to Mr. Jenkinson's assertion, that if game was rendered private property, the temptation to poachers would be the same, he insisted that the case would be widely different in that represented by the honourable gentleman; for as soon as game became the legal property of the proprietor of the land, he would then be enabled to dispose of it in any manner he might think proper, and to send it to market in the same manner as he might any other commodity; so that the poacher, who was now the person that publicly sold game, would not, under such circumstances, have so strong an inducement to steal as he now had, in the consideration of the proprietor's furnishing the market with the article, the exclusive profits and sale of which before rested with himself.

Mr. BURDON expressed a considerable degree of surprise, that a question of adjournment should be proposed for the purpose of getting rid of a business which appeared to have the general concurrence of the House, especially when the injustice and oppression of the present system was so universally admitted. He was anxious that the British Constitution should be made as free, nay, more free than that of any other country in Europe, which it was impossible it could be so long as the tyrannical and oppressive code of game laws was permitted to disgrace our statutes.

Mr. ROBERT SALUSBURY was of opinion, that the game laws ought to be taken into the consideration of a Committee of the whole House, previous to any other step being taken upon them.

Mr. CURWEN, as the House was going to divide, observed, that in case the motion for an adjournment was negatived, he would consent that the subject should, in the first instance, be referred to a Committee, sensible that the more the game laws were investigated, the more obnoxious they would appear.

A division then took place, when the numbers appeared,

For the adjournment, - - 27

Against it, - - - 50

Majority — 23

Mr. CURWEN then moved, "That this House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of the laws this day se'nnight. Carried without a division.

The House adjourned.

*Monday, 7th March.*

Upon the question, that the House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, on the bill for abolishing the Trade,

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that the bill had undergone alterations, and that he wished it to be reprinted for the Members.

General SMITH said, that if the bill had undergone alterations it should have induced the honourable gentleman to postpone consideration of it. He would oppose the Speaker leaving the House and the House going into the Committee.

General TARLETON said, if on a subject already so fully discussed, he said a few words, he hoped, from the peculiar situation, he would receive the indulgence of the House. He said, that by the abolition, a great many manufacturers would be deprived of subsistence, as the demand for certain articles would be less. At such a period, when a general scarcity pressed so heavily on the community, it would be unwise to add to the number of the unemployed. A very respectable class of merchants, particularly those of the place he had the honour to represent, (Liverpool) would be severely in consequence of the abolition. The vessels used in the slave trade were of a peculiar construction, and would be useless in other branches of commerce. This certainly entitled them to compensation or indemnification for the loss on this head. He had heard that the trade was unfavourable to the raising of seamen; but he would not say so. Naval gentlemen, if more or better sailors were found anywhere than at Liverpool and other places engaged in the slave trade, would not be disturbed. The disturbances in the West Indies rendered this period very unpropitious for the adoption of the proposed abolition. All the negroes employed in military service would never return to agriculture, and therefore this was not a time to check the importation. If any regard was to be had to West-India property, which had already fallen one-third in value, such a measure should not be rashly adopted. When the bill

race was restored, he said he would concur in any plan for the  
ual abolition, in which the rights of property were preserved.

Mr. BARHAM defended those who had opposed the abolition.  
considered that they had acted a part of which they had no rea-  
to be ashamed. He was convinced that the present bill would  
effect that abolition at which it aimed. He wondered that  
e of the gentlemen so eager to promote the abolition did not go  
inform themselves with respect to the treatment of the negroes  
n personal observation. He said, that accounts from the West  
es stated, that the slave trade was almost a non-entity. He  
ld not attend the Committee, but would take a future oppor-  
ty of delivering his sentiments on the subject. The friends of  
abolition were not aware of the danger that would result from  
measure. Much blood, he was afraid, would be shed, which  
ld lie upon the heads of those who so zealously had promoted it.

Mr. W. SMITH said, he would not enter into the subject at  
e, but he would answer one point of the honourable gentleman's  
th. Besides that the friends to the abolition had other avoca-  
e, it was not necessary that they should have personal knowledge  
e state of the negroes. They had other means of information  
facts sufficient to justify them in calling upon a British House  
Commons to abolish a traffic, which in its first principles violated  
ce and humanity.

Mr. BOUVERIE said, if the slave trade was indeed only a  
entity, surely no harm could result from the abolition. In his  
d, it was a question of justice and humanity that excluded all  
siderations of policy and expedience.

Mr. ADDINGTON said a few words on the danger of an im-  
iate abolition.

Mr. MILBANK said, he put out of view the treatment of the  
es in considering this subject. The very name of slave sounded  
natural to an English ear, that this was sufficient to determine  
vote on the present occasion, and he had uniformly supported  
abolition of the slave trade, as a practice repugnant to the Bri-  
Constitution.

The question was then put, "That the Speaker do now leave  
chair?"

Ayes 76

Noes 31

Majority 45

The House then resolved itself into a Committee of the whole  
e, Mr. Elliot in the chair.

The period at which Mr. Wilberforce proposed that the should be finally abolished, was the first of March, 1797.

Mr. DENT said, that the period was much too short. It in reality little more than eight months. This appeared to be a very important point; the amount of the exportation and importation of this trade, and on that which it was connected was not less than 10 millions of money. The House ought to take great care upon this subject; not to do any thing that might be injurious to the West-India trade, such as he was confident the measure would be if adopted by the Legislature.

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN knew not by what sort of calculation it was the honourable Member discovered that from March to March, was only eight months. Indeed he did not see how could the friends of this trade had to complain of haste in the proceeding. They had reason to apprehend that abolition was years ago.

Mr. DENT said, this proceeding was a disgrace to this country. So long as Magna Charta remained it would be a disgrace to the country; for he conceived that the very principle of this bill was hostile to the declaration of that great charter. It went directly to annul the various proclamations that had from that time and even so far back as the time of Oliver Cromwell, been in favour of the slave trade. This bill was an immediate overthrow of the rights of property.

Mr. BUXTON was of opinion, that the slave trade was a disgrace to this country. He was glad that Magna Charta had mentioned, for it formed a striking contrast to the slave trade. Taken together, they presented a picture of the difference between slavery and liberty.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR said he had some concern for the reputation of Magna Charta, for he had often professed, and as often expressed great veneration for it. He had read it over many times, and had never seen any thing in it that professed to favour the slave trade. If there was, it had escaped him in the course of many readings, and he would be thankful to the honourable Member to point out to him the passage in Magna Charta, wherein the slave trade was acknowledged. This business was indeed a disgrace to the nation, as the honourable gentleman had said, but it was not the abolition of the slave trade that was the continuance of the traffic, which constituted this disgrace. The Committee would now proceed in the bill before them, if they had any regard for the sense which the House itself had already declared upon that subject.

Mr. DENT said, he would repeat it, that this proceeding



a disgrace to this country, and contrary to one of the express declarations of Magna Charta. The words of that Charta were, "that right shall neither be sold, delayed, or denied." Now he would ask, whether, if this bill passed, right would not be sold, delayed and denied? What was the Committee now doing? Selling, delaying and denying the rights of the West-India merchants and planters. The House of Commons had passed several resolutions on this trade, which were now before another House? Would the Committee reflect on the indelicacy of carrying up to the Lords, a bill upon this subject, before their Lordships came to any determination upon the former resolutions.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR recollected perfectly well the passage in Magna Charta to which the honourable Member alluded, and he thought the passage applicable to the bill now before the Committee, "That right should neither be sold, delayed, or denied." But, before we talk of right, we must establish the existence of that right. He denied the existence of our right to enslave others: he knew of no origin to the right of slavery in this country; he knew of no power that the Legislature of this country had to protect the slave trade; and he must protest against the authority, if any such there was, for that protection. He agreed, however, that right, in this case, was sold, delayed, and denied:—Right was sold when the Africans were sold; right was delayed when the abolition of the slave trade was delayed; right will be denied when the Legislature of this country shall refuse to put an end to that traffic which creates misery and promotes murder.

General SMITH said, he should oppose this bill in every stage; and he was convinced it would never pass into a law.

The question for the commencement of the bill on the first of March, 1797, was put and carried.

Mr. WILBERFORCE then proposed a clause to subject those who shall, in due form of law, be convicted of carrying on this trade against this act, to transportation to Botany Bay, or elsewhere, for 14 years.—Agreed to by the Committee.

He then brought up a number of other clauses, which were agreed to.

The House being resumed, the Report was received immediately, and ordered to be taken into consideration this day se'nnight; and the bill, with the amendments, was ordered to be printed.

The SECRETARY AT WAR brought up an estimate of barracks intended to be built, together with the probable expence of erecting them---Ordered to be laid on the table, and to be printed.

*Tuesday, 8th March.*

Mr. MANNING moved the order of the day for the second reading of the Wet Docks' bill.

The LORD MAYOR said, he wished that this bill should be put off for a few days; and, he hoped, upon consideration, would appear satisfactory to the House, and to the honourable gentleman who brought it in. The city of London had taken the subject very fully into consideration, and a plan was now actually in preparation, which, he believed, would be found to answer the purpose of accommodation, both to the public and to individuals. This plan would very speedily be produced; and, therefore, he wished, that the present bill should not be pressed forward, but trusted, that the honourable gentleman who had introduced the bill, would agree with him in the propriety of a short delay. That he desired was, to defer the second reading for a few days. The House would then be convinced, that the citizens of London were willing to make every sacrifice for the accommodation of the commercial interest of the country.

Mr. MANNING said, that after what had fallen from the worthy Magistrate, he certainly felt himself bound not to oppose the delay, which had been requested upon such fair grounds. As he was therefore, as he was interested in the business, he should give his consent to postpone this bill for a few days, until the plan mentioned by the worthy Magistrate could be produced and examined.

The second reading of the bill was then put off till Wednesday next.

Mr. RYDER, Chairman of the Committee which had been appointed to take into consideration the present high price of corn, brought up several resolutions agreed to by the Committee, which were read a second time, agreed to, and a bill ordered to be brought in upon them.

The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 10th March.*

Mr. GREY, in pursuance of the notice which he had given, moved a motion for an inquiry into the state of the national finances, and addressed the House nearly to the following purport.—Though no difference of opinion has prevailed in the House, and divided minds on the justice of the principle on which the war was originally undertaken, and on the manner in which it has since been conducted. I think there is one point in which we all agree, that the present situation of the country is of high importance; that it is big

sequences which it is impossible for the wisest to foresee, but the prospect of which, even to the most sanguine, cannot impart much satisfaction. We are arrived at a crisis which must lead either to life or death, and next to him, on whom the issues of life and death depend, the care, the vigilance, and integrity, or the remissness, neglect, and corruption of those whom the people have chosen, the guardians of their liberties, and the stewards of their fortune, will tend to decide the fate of the country. I now call upon the representatives of the people to discharge a duty which they cannot easily commit to others, to institute an inquiry into the state of the nation. The task is of a nature, which, I am conscious, my poor abilities are unequal to execute. But besides this, there are peculiar discouragements, which, if the cause I have undertaken, did not approve itself to my mind as of the utmost magnitude and importance, might serve to damp my zeal. The fate of former motions of a similar nature, and the thin attendance of the House on the present occasion (a melancholy proof that Members of Parliament do not consider the state of the nation as an object of sufficient moment to make them leave their dinners) are to me no flattering indications of success. Notwithstanding all these discouragements, however, I have determined to proceed, in the consciousness that I am doing my duty; if not in the hopes that my exertions will produce all that effect which I could desire. Last year, a right honourable friend of mine (Mr. Fox) proposed an inquiry into the state of the nation. He was induced to submit the proposition to the House, from a sense of dangers impending on the country at the time. Since that period, these dangers have multiplied both in number and extent. But certainly it would be vain for me to expect what his superior talents were unable to obtain. He took a general and comprehensive view of the situation of the country, which he was well qualified to do. He investigated the origin, and surveyed the conduct of the war. He discussed both our domestic situation and our foreign alliances; and upon a broad and general statement, which, from a proposition of such a nature, from such a person, might be expected, he moved for a Committee of Inquiry. At present I mean to take a more humble and more confined line of reasoning, and one more suited to my abilities. If a Committee shall be appointed to conduct the course of the inquiry, a more enlarged view of our situation will open to our prospect, and an opportunity will then be afforded of considering the failures of the war, the causes in which they have originated, and particularly the disasters which have attended the late West-India expedition—into the circumstances of which an honourable friend of mine, Mr. Sheridan (whom I am sorry not to

see in his place) has given notice of a motion for an inquiry, a motion which I hope he will not forget to bring forward. The House of Commons are in a peculiar manner the guardians of the public purse, and sustaining this constitutional character, it is a duty immediately incumbent on them to attend to the resources of the country.

It will be universally admitted, that whatever may be the causes which may have led to the present conjuncture, that the country is in a situation highly important. Another admission, which I think myself entitled, is, that whether we persevere in the war, an event, which in my opinion will be melancholy beyond example, or whether we look forward to that which to all men must be desirable, the conclusion of peace; when we consider the growing burdens of the people, it is a duty to which their representatives are called, to put the national resources in the best possible situation. If the war is continued, it is absolutely impossible that we can go on, year after year, in the present system of extravagance, adding millions to the capital of our debt, and thousands to the pressure of our taxes. If the happy prospect of peace, which, without much reason, we have sometimes of late been taught to entertain, be realized, it is surely desirable to put ourselves in the best possible posture of defence. And neither success in war, nor security in peace, can be so well attained as by an accurate acquaintance with our real situation. When peace shall be concluded, I hope it will be upon grounds which may be calculated to inspire as few jealousies in future as possible; but as long as imperfection adheres to man, and as long as passion continues more or less, to influence the Administration of Government, jealousies must sometimes exist. If the Government of France (which I have no difficulty in saying I wish may retain its Republican form) be finally settled on a permanent foundation, it will naturally become an object for that country to protect its vulnerable part by increasing the strength of its marine.—The conduct of a potentate in the north of Europe, who, from her conduct in the present war, leaves us little doubt of her intentions, and against whose operations we ought to be formidably prepared. But, without any extended survey of the general policy of Europe, it is sufficient to perceive the necessity of maintaining our Maritime superiority, and this can only be done by paying a proper degree of attention to our financial resources. Having said this much generally, I now proceed to the more immediate object of my motion. This is the fourth year of the war, and the expences which we have incurred in the last three years may be pretty accurately ascertained. From the accounts which have been laid before the House, it



years that we have already added seventy-seven millions to the capital of the national debt. In order to provide for the interest of this sum, new taxes must be imposed, to the amount of 2,600,000l. Now, when we consider this clear and indisputable fact, that the debt contracted in the present war is more than the aggregate sum of the national debt, previous to the year 1756; this very fact affords, in my opinion, an argument sufficiently powerful to induce the House to institute an inquiry into the state of the country, and particularly into the manner in which this debt has been contracted. Here, however, I must claim some indulgence to myself. Till lately I was not much acquainted with the subject of finance, and even with all the attention which I have been able to bestow, perhaps my statements may not, in every instance, be perfectly correct. I hope, however, I am justifiable in claiming some indulgence from the House, when I assure them, that it will give me much satisfaction, if the disagreeable conclusions which I have been led to draw from some of those statements, can be corrected by any explanation; and when I assure them that I shall not wilfully misstate any circumstance, and that in matters of dubiety I shall always lean to the favourable side. If my general statement of the amount of the debt contracted in the course of the three last years be accurate, the expences have certainly been much greater than they ever were at any former period of equal length, or in the execution of any service of a similar nature. But here I must premise a few observations upon the war. It has been said, that in point of extent, it cannot be compared with any former war, in which this country was ever engaged. Certainly, however, the extent of the present war is much exaggerated, when the proportion of expence incurred is justified by the extent of the services performed. When we compare the present war, in its principle, or in its conduct, with former wars, there is nothing in either which will not find a parallel in the history of past times. Let us look back to King William's war, when we were struggling for the same objects for which we now profess to contend, our Constitution, and the security of our religion. We have no greater cause now than we had then, nor can we have any stronger incentive to exertion. Compare it with the American war, when we had to contend with many powers united. Now we are leagued with a great and powerful confederacy against a single foe, who had been represented debilitated, exhausted, and ruined. Then we had a strong army in support, against a revolt in our colonies, which we were obliged to suppress, not obliged, perhaps, for I certainly did not think we were under any obligation, but which the Executive Government at that time

thought proper to attempt to quell. Then also it was our fort to contend, both in the East and West Indies, against three of the greatest maritime powers in Europe at the same time. But though the pressure of this country was then infinitely greater than it is now, the expence of the contest was much less extravagant. And I must request that the House will remark, what is the war to which I am comparing it. It is the American war, a war which was branded at the time with every epithet of abuse which could be affixed upon its conductors for the extravagance and profusion with which it was marked. At the end of this war, of record, extravagance and acknowledged profusion, the debt contracted fifty-three millions. At the end of the third year of this war, an increase of debt amounts to seventy-seven millions, which is fifteen millions more in one-half of the time. I shall be told, perhaps, that great expence does not always imply criminality. I allow the observation to be just; but does not an enormous expenditure afford reasonable ground for inquiry into the nature of the vices in which it has been employed? Let us take a view of the expence incurred by the war, down to December 1795. In the course of the last three years, there has been voted on estimate for the navy 15,200,000*l*. For the army there has been voted on estimate 17,600,000*l*. and for the ordnance there has been voted on estimate, in the same period, 2,600,000*l*. making for the three services, a sum of 35,500,000*l*. a sum infinitely greater than ever was voted for the same services, in any former time of equal length.—But while the House was answering all the demands which the Minister could make, when their liberality was so adequate to satisfy the most extravagant wishes he ever ventured to express, they cannot be but astonished when they come to see the magnitude of the expence which has been incurred without the authority of Parliament, and for which no Legislative provision has been made. And here I would beg leave to call the attention of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) to a principle which he professed in 1782, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which was publicly and formally avowed that year in His Majesty's speech from the throne. His Majesty speaking of the national debt in this speech, says, "Notwithstanding the great increase of the debt during the war, it is to be hoped that such regulations may be established, such savings made, and future loans so conducted, as to promote the means of its gradual redemption by a fixed course of payment. I must with particular earnestness, distinguish your serious consideration that part of the debt which consists in the navy, ordnance, and victualling bills. The enormous dis-

some of these bills, shews this mode of payment to be a most  
expedient. I have ordered the several estimates, made up  
correctly as the present practice would admit, to be laid before  
the House. I hope that such farther corrections as may be necessary,  
shall be made, before the next year. It is my desire that you should  
be apprized of every expence before it is incurred, as far as the  
nature of each service can possibly admit. Matters of account can  
never be made too public." This was the opinion which the right  
honourable gentleman entertained upon the subject as far back as  
1782; and this opinion he again recognized in opening the budget  
in 1793. He then stated, that he had made ample provision for  
a long and extended scale of operation, and that it was his wish, in  
every particular manner, to keep down the unfunded, and especially the  
navy debt.—Coming forward with this profession, he obtained from  
Parliament grants uncommonly liberal, and with these grants in  
his hands, we now find that he has incurred a greater additional  
expence than ever was incurred in any former year: and the navy  
debt, which it was his professed object to reduce, now amounts to  
£1,788,000. In addition to this, I shall take the liberty to  
add another circumstance: within a month after the budget was  
presented, no less than £1,546,000. was employed to discharge the  
debt of last year, which, with the navy debt, makes above  
£3,334,000 a year; so that the House is reduced to this situation,  
that after voting £17,000,000 for the service of the year, they find  
that there remains a debt of no less than thirteen millions. Much  
has been said of our naval exertions, and I am sure no man is more  
proud of our superiority by sea than I am. But when we compare  
the expence with the service performed, and the relative strength  
of the enemy at the present moment, the means that we have placed  
in the hands of Ministers, appear to be very inadequate to the use  
they have made of them. It is certainly matter of much satis-  
faction, that whenever we have fairly met the enemy at sea—that  
the valour of British seamen has never been more signally displayed.  
That though our prowess has been abundantly conspicuous, when  
there was opportunity for exertion in the general application of our  
maritime strength, there has been a very considerable failure of at-  
tention. There never was a war in which our trade was worse  
protected; and though some improvement has taken place since a  
recent change was made in the Board of Admiralty, the merchants  
have still ground for complaint. Our expence, however, has in-  
creased with our losses. In no year before 1780, was there above one  
million voted for the discharge of the navy debt. This was during  
the American war; but in the present war we have voted fifteen



millions, and spent thirteen millions, without estimate.—The army expences are not less striking than those of the navy. Within the last three years there has been voted on estimate for the army seventeen millions, and the account of extraordinaries amounts to 9,030,000*l*. The present has not only been a much larger estimate than ever was offered at any former period; but in addition to the estimate, there have been votes of Credit, the fruits of which are applicable to the service of the army, which were never given before. Of the application of these votes of Credit, there is no particular account; but they appear placed generally to the account of the Paymaster General of the Forces. They amount, however, to 4,478,000*l*. which makes the expenditure exceed the estimate by 14,300,000*l*. This, one would think, might strike gentlemen as peculiarly strange and unconstitutional, as it is an expence over which Parliament has no control; an expence which is not provided for till after it is incurred; and an expence which the House must ultimately defray. Is this my opinion alone? No, it is sanctioned by the best political writers, and by the resolutions of the House of Commons itself.—These Resolutions are to be found in the Report of a Committee of the House in eight years, two, of which Committee Lord Camelford was Chairman, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer a member. Notwithstanding, however, that the right honourable gentleman then reproached that system, he has since acted upon to an extent beyond all previous extravagance in any former administration. But that it may not rest on bare assertion alone, let us go back to a period still more remote than the American war, and compare our present expenditure with what it was in former times. I am ready to admit, that, considering the increased expence of every thing, it is impossible to carry on a war now as economically as at a distant period. But this admission must be received with some grains of qualification. In every comparison, however contrasted, there must be something like proportion, and some attention also must be paid to the rise and fall of the articles which enter into the departments of expence, of which the estimate is made. The extraordinaries of the army in King William's nine years war, did not greatly exceed a million. In the eleven years war, in the reign of Queen Anne, they did not exceed two millions: so that during the twenty years war, in the reign of King William and Queen Anne, the extraordinaries of the army did not amount to more than one half of the extraordinaries of the present year. Some perhaps might say that the increase of wars, in point of expence, had arisen from the introduction of a number of abuses which could not now be remedied.

ced there was too much reason for feeling the force of that observation. But, in King William's reign, were there no complaints of extravagance? Were there no complaints against the Duke of Marlborough for his prodigal expenditure both of men and money? But the expence at that time was not incurred for nought. It was for war of victories. The victories of Ramillies and Blenheim were gained, and Gibraltar was captured. But although the brilliant achievements of that General had gained immortal honour to the British name, and although we had so much reason to rejoice at our taking Gibraltar, the jealousy of the House of Commons was extended to the conduct of our public affairs in those times, trifling as the expence was; compared to the present, so trifling that the difference between them was at least forty to one. And what had we at present to comfort us in this immense expence of our army? Last year no victory crowned our exertions; we had not a single advantage to compensate for our loss of treasure.—We had no where 5000 men in action. When these circumstances are considered, I would be glad to know if there is any proportion between the increase of our exertions, and the increase of our expences; or if there be not the disproportion of forty to one between the necessary expences of the present, and the expences of past wars? In some things the expence now is no more than it was then. An officer at present is not allowed more equipage money than he was allowed in the time of Queen Anne. We heard sometimes, however, that a number of different expences were thrust in among the extraordinary of the army, which do not strictly come under that description. Of this it is only necessary to say, that it is a gross abuse, and an imposition attempted to be practised upon the public. But leaving those times, when great men performed great exploits, with small means—times, the review of which are calculated to inspire contempt of present men and present measures, let us come down to a more extravagant period, and compare extravagance with extravagance. The American war was once supposed to be the achme of profusion, beyond which it was impossible to go: those who regarded it so, had but little in them of the prophetic. I will not make comparisons between this war and that of the American, because it is hardly fair to consider that war in comparison with this before the French joined in it. I know of no period in the history of the country with which the present might be supposed to derive more advantage from a comparison than that in which we were engaged in a war with France in 1778, 1779, and 1780, and the expence even of this war will be found extremely moderate, when compared with the present expence. The sum total in these three

most expensive years, did not amount in extraordinaries and votes of credit to above nine millions. The extraordinaries of the army in the present war, have already amounted to nine millions, besides votes of credit to the amount of five millions more, exceeding the votes of credit at that time (which altogether only made 2,700,000) by almost one half. I will appeal to the judgement and integrity of the House, if such a difference, between present and past expences, and between the actual expence and estimate provided for, be not a fit object of inquiry. The reason for an inquiry becomes still more pressing, when we compare what has been done now with what was done then. In that war we had to support an army of 40,000 men in America; we had a large army in the West Indies; and we had a gallant army, whose services will never be forgotten, defending themselves in Gibraltar, against the combined efforts of France and Spain. In the course of last year, where had you an army acting? What single advantage did you gain? You had indeed an army of 2000 men, buffeted about from one German principality to another; from Hesse Cassel to the Electorate of Hanover, and from Hanover to Bremerlee, till at last they were forced to embark for England. You planned a ridiculous expedition to Quiberon, and another, as ridiculous, to Isle Dieu. You had an army in the West-Indies indeed; but how were they employed? Not in making conquests; but in a hard struggle to defend our own possessions. With such facts before us, if the House refuse to enter into an inquiry, they at once waive their privilege, desert their duty, and surrender their controlling power over the public purse. The extravagance of the last year in this war was so great, the effect of it so disastrous, the weakness of the councils conducting it so manifest, that, I again repeat, if the House of Commons refuse to go into an inquiry upon it, they surrender neither more nor less than surrender entirely to the Minister the power given to them by the Constitution for the benefit of the people, which in effect will amount to saying, that they are ready to sanction all abuses, and will never inquire into the expenditure of public money. So much for the army. Now for the ordnance, another branch of service, in which we have heard so much of economy and of reduction of expence. For this head of service, 2,608,000 was voted on estimate; and it appears from the accounts that the extraordinaries amount to 2,764,000. a sum actually exceeding the estimate which was offered, and this too in another branch of service, the expences of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer promised to keep as low as possible. To this



cy, the same observations which were made upon the army and  
y, apply with equal propriety. It is a practice unconstitutional  
tself, a practice which has been condemned by Parliament, a  
tice which has been reprobated in a speech of His Majesty from  
throne, and a practice which the Chancellor of the Exchequer  
nly pledged himself to the House, not to give into. Having  
s gone through the detail, let us take the different sums together,  
put them in one point of view. For the joint services, there  
e been voted on estimate, thirty-five millions, the whole amount  
he debt contracted; beyond the estimate is thirty-one millions,  
ended without the consent, consequently without the control of  
liament. All this extraordinary and enormous sum, which with  
sums voted by Parliament, amounted to sixty-six millions, eight  
ndred thousand pounds, funded in the three and four per cents.  
nt in three years of the present war, in which little can be found,  
continued discomfiture, defeat, and disgrace. Now let the  
ht honourable gentleman say what he please, I must aver, that  
a British House of Commons to let such a statement pass without  
erious inquiry into its truth, is neither more nor less than to rob  
plunder the nation. Perhaps the right honourable gentleman may  
mind us of some successes in a certain quarter of the world which  
ve been obtained in the course of the war. In these I am certainly  
y nearly interested, and it would become any man rather than  
e to speak of them. There certainly was a short period of success  
the West Indies; but what has since happened in that part of the  
orld, fully justifies me in not exempting it from having contributed  
share to compleat the picture of general disgrace. Were I to  
ave the subject here, I certainly might challenge an inquiry upon  
e grounds I have already taken. But it does not stop here. We  
ot only find an extravagance of expenditure in the public accounts,  
at we find the money applied to purposes the most unconstitutional  
themselves, and the most dangerous to the state. Who is not  
tonished, for instance, at the incredible sum which has been ex-  
ended in the erection of barracks? When the system was first  
ndertaken, it occurred to me as a very unconstitutional proceeding,  
nd as a gross infringement upon the rights of the House. Upon  
e score of unconstitutionality however, I had little hopes of the  
nterference of the House; for from what I have had occasion to  
bserve, they have seldom displayed any great anxiety to prevent  
ne encroachments of the Crown. But nothing could exceed my  
urprise, when I found in the accounts of the army extraordinaries  
e expence of erecting permanent barracks since the year 1790,  
ated at the enormous sum of 1,100,000*l.* and in addition to this

a purpose avowed of laying out upwards of 200,000*l.* more the same object. That this should have been done without consent and authority of Parliament, and merely at the discretion of a Minister, appears to me the grossest insult that ever was offered to the House of Commons. What sort of army are we to have? I have been told that the barracks already erected are calculated to accommodate 40,000 men, whereas the ordinary peace establishment used to be only 18,000 men. In the system of erecting barracks, not only the expence, but the influence created by them is an object for the consideration of the House. Barrack-masters have been appointed in great numbers, with large salaries; and contracts have been entered into all over the kingdom, so that the salaries and places, to which they have given rise, will amount to half the reductions of Mr. Burke's reform bill. There is also a curious circumstance in the accounts. Some of the barrack-masters are stated as acting. Pray, what are the others doing? Perhaps they are preparing for a general election. A very odd circumstance happened to come to my knowledge respecting a barrack-master at Lincoln. An intention was formed of building barracks at Lincoln, the ground was never so much as marked out for the purpose, and at last the intention itself was relinquished. As for barracks, however, as it was first thought of, it was absolutely necessary to have a barrack-master. Accordingly they appointed a person of the name of Parsons, a dancing-master or saddler, to the situation. He enjoyed a salary of 200*l.* for two years, and then they gave him a compensation when they found it necessary to deprive him of the situation for having enjoyed it. The opinions of the best writers upon the constitution, were clearly against barracks altogether. Barracks were indeed they were called, but more properly by Blackstone, "inland fortresses." Why did not the Minister tell the people plainly what purpose these fortresses for forty thousand men were really erected? This subject of itself demanded an inquiry in that House. It was not the expence alone which created the objection, it was the influence which they might have, and which they might be intended to have. I am warranted in entertaining this suspicion when I couple the barracks with certain expressions used in the House by a Cabinet Minister, such as "vigour beyond the law." I am warranted in making the strongest objections against barracks both in the view of national economy and national liberty. Is this extravagance confined to the land service? Does not the naval department afford many instances of a similar nature? During the American war there was a Navy Board. The business however, has been found too arduous for the board, and a depu-



mpptroller has been appointed. The management of the transport service also has been considered as imposing too much duty on the commissioners of the navy, and accordingly a transport board with five commissioners, with salaries of 1000*l.* each, has been appointed; and this too in the modern stile of conducting the public business without the consent or authority of Parliament. But why I mention this? Because the debt incurred by this branch of service alone amounts to 2,900,000*l.* a sum which under Lord North's administration, was thought an extravagant estimate for building seventy ships of the line. And how is the service managed by this new board, and these new commissioners? Admiral Christian was detained in port for the want of the ordnance transports, till the season for sailing passed by, the wind changed, and all the disasters which afterwards befel his fleet was the consequence. Now I hear that the Ordnance Office wish to provide their own transports, because they have been so ill supplied by this transport board.

Having stated the immoderate expence of three years war, I have now to add a few considerations on the mode which the right honourable gentleman has adopted of raising money. One would have supposed, that a Minister, who has never been denied by Parliament any thing he ever demanded, who has only to ask, in order to receive, who has had the whole management of the war exclusively to himself, and who has been furnished with the most liberal grants for carrying it on, would never have had recourse to any unusual or unjustifiable means of raising money. But instead of this, we find him moving for votes of credit, to defray the expences of past service; and by means of one of these bills contriving to repeal an existing statute, which tended to obstruct his unconstitutional measures. I have great objections to votes of credit, on two general grounds; they lead to concealment as to the nature of the expence, and they put it out of the power of Parliament to judge of the merit of the service to which the expence is applied, till after it is incurred. In the present session he pressed the Vote of Credit bill through the House, in such a way as evidently proved that its operations were to be retrospective, contrary to the express intention with which it was voted. We have upon the table an account of the money advanced by the Bank for the public service. Parliament, in various instances, has sanctioned the practice. But the Bank of England is a recourse of which Parliament ought to be extremely jealous, and which no good Minister would wish to trifle with.—The Bank has made greater advances during the present war, than at any former period; a circumstance which has contri-

204  
 buted not a little to distress the commercial world, by putting  
 out of its power to grant the usual accommodation to the mercantile  
 In December, 1795, the money advanced by the Bank, and  
 standing, amounted to eleven millions; and what was very  
 remarkable, it appears by the accounts that they were in advance  
 two votes of credit at the same time. Neither has the mode  
 which money has been procured been the most honourable; by means  
 of Treasury bills of exchange, a mode which is a direct infringement  
 of the act of William and Mary, respecting the Bank. This was  
 by a clause surreptitiously introduced into the bill, and which the  
 Secretary of the Treasury, without any proper notice to the House,  
 muttered in a sort of running bass, has been artfully repeated  
 say artfully; he never stated that the act had been violated, or  
 that the Bank was subject to the penalty of the law. But the  
 abundant the supplies granted by Parliament, the greater seem to  
 be our deficiencies. Last year, a loan of unusual magnitude was  
 voted. In the month of September the Chancellor of the Exchequer  
 entered into a negotiation, (the Hamburg bills) which a prudent  
 mercantile house would have been considered as an act of bankruptcy.  
 In the month of October he was obliged to meet Parliament for a new loan; and in the month of February following  
 a vote of credit is demanded to pay off part of arrears. And at  
 all, 14,500,000 is left unprovided for at the end of the year.  
 There is another subject on which I wish to say a few words.  
 When Parliament votes sums for any particular purpose, does it  
 or does it not, mean that these sums shall be applied to the purpose  
 for which they are voted? And when they are differently applied,  
 will they, or will they not, consider misapplication as matter of  
 serious animadversion? If they do, then I bring something more  
 a serious charge, when I assert that the disposition paper cannot  
 depended on. By the appropriation act, it is enacted that the  
 money for the cloathing of the army shall be issued half-yearly.  
 In this paper, it is stated as having been regularly disposed of ac-  
 cording to act of Parliament; whereas I know that no money has  
 been issued for this purpose since Midsummer 1794. Which is  
 also very strange, there is not one of their agents to whom Govern-  
 ment is not in debt. The money voted for the staff also has not  
 been applied to the purpose for which it was voted. With these  
 facts before them, I ask, as a member of Parliament, of a British  
 House of Commons, have I, or have I not, submitted a grave and  
 serious charge, a charge into the grounds of which it is well worth  
 their while to inquire? What will be our situation if we are not  
 at a peace? What will be the probable expence of a peace?

ment?—The Committee appointed to inquire into the national resources in the year 1786, reported, that they estimated the peace establishment in 1790, might be 15,000,000*l.* annual, including the annual million. In 1791, another Committee was appointed, who enlarged the estimate to 15,900,000*l.* including the annual million. I must confess I am rather inclined to form my opinion upon the actual expence, than on any useful theory which a Committee might form. I would take therefore, the average expence of the five years preceding 1790, which in 1788 was 16,700,000*l.* to which, if you add the interest due upon the capital of debt, contracted since the commencement of the war, amounting to 26,000,000*l.* one million for interest of unfunded debt, and some allowance for an increased half-pay list, and the expence of barracks, together with the additional 1,000*l.* which I suppose, will be continued to be appropriated to the liquidation of the national debt, I cannot estimate the proper peace establishment at less than twenty-two millions. Now I could beg leave to call your attention, to the mode in which we mean to provide for this debt. The net produce of the permanent taxes, is now precisely 15,735,876*l.* which, together with the land and malt, estimated at a little more than three millions, will make up a revenue of about nineteen millions, so that all there will remain two millions to be provided for, by annual permanent taxes to that amount! Let gentlemen consider and deny the propriety of instituting an inquiry into the state of the nation, if they can. If we go on in this way, it is impossible to say how near we are approaching to our end. Let me entreat the House to look at the pressure now felt by their constituents, and the still greater pressure which they must feel. The right honourable gentleman, by his liquidating scheme, has removed an encumbrance from the nation of 16,000,000*l.* and saddled them with one hundred millions. It is borrowing with one hand to pay with the other; and reminds me of a Dutch print, in which a man is represented as very industrious in twisting a rope of hay while an ass treading it off at the other end, as fast as it is twisted. There are gentlemen in the House who have manifested on trying occasions, a noble and manly spirit of independence. If there is any gentleman more than another, whose fortune is such as might be expected to beget such a spirit, it is the honourable Baronet (Sir W. Grey) who spoke the other night, and who expressed his surprise at approaching almost to that which he would have felt at a miracle, at the accuracy of the public estimates. When I inform that the honourable Baronet that the expences had been just about double

the amount of the estimates, I hope the information will come forward in a manly way, to support a motion for an inquiry. I hope also, that the gentlemen, seriously convinced of the alarming crisis to which we are hastening, and actuated by a just regard for their own peace as well as for the national interest, will free themselves from the influence of that loadstone which is imperceptibly drawing them to the gulph of ruin. The present extravagance of Government is a monster, which if you do not destroy, it will soon destroy you. It is a monster which must be destroyed early; for if you do not, in any way, not all the Herculean strength of the country will be able to vanquish it.

*Non Hydra scilicet corpore firmior.*

*Crevit in Herculem vinci dolentem.*

He called upon the House to exercise its most valuable and its most important power, the inquisitorial power of the Commons of Great Britain, and therefore moved "That the House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider the state of the nation."

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY rose, not, he said, to answer the honourable gentleman (Mr. Gray) what were the considerations that should influence the vote he would give on the present occasion, but to reassert what he had stated on a former occasion (on the Hamburgh bills), namely, that the financial statements on that subject by the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, were accurate to a miracle, and that they possessed the highest degree of accuracy attainable in such matters, would be convincing to every candid man who would duly attend to the variety of the un-  
seen exigences that might arise, and of which no exact estimate could be formed. Where such various services were to be performed, and such large sums to be raised, the error of 700,000 would not be material, as it was endeavoured to be represented.

Mr. JENKINSON said, that the power of this House over the purse of the nation was certainly a most important trust, and should be exercised with vigilance and purity: But it should not be forgotten, that in exercising it, they had two duties to attend to, viz. jealousy on the one hand, and confidence on the other. Without a proper jealousy, they might betray their trust; and without confidence, Ministers could not possibly act with the vigour and effect necessary to the conduct of the Executive Government. They should, therefore, take care not to attach themselves too closely to one, so as to renounce the other. Having premised so much, he was willing to meet the honourable gentleman who



ion, on the question as it simply stood, viz. were there fair  
 ounds for such an inquiry as had been demanded? On that he  
 ed the House to decide. They would, no doubt, see, that to  
 a measure there were many objections, unless such strong and  
 antial grounds were laid before them, as to shew that the neces-  
 of inquiry superseded every consideration that forbade it. To  
 arguments of the honourable gentleman, he would reply with  
 much perspicuity as he could, hoping to be able to demonstrate,  
 there was no reasonable ground whatsoever for inquiry, and, as  
 as the honourable gentleman, would bespeak the indulgence  
 he House, if he should happen to fall into error. As to the  
 ence of the war, it could not, taken by itself, be a ground of  
 ne or censure on Ministers. Every war in the records of our  
 ory was more expensive than the former. This arose from a  
 iety of circumstances, so obvious as scarcely to require circum-  
 ntial notice. Every individual must have found the same in-  
 ase in his own private concerns, and observed the progressive  
 argement of his domestic expences. This principle should be  
 llied to the point in question; and the scale of expenditure esti-  
 mated by a fair proportion between the expences of former wars  
 and the present, taking into consideration all the difference of cir-  
 cumstances. The House, he observed, should consider the enemy  
 had to deal with; they should recollect, that the French pro-  
 duced the war with an utter disregard of means or expences, by  
 which they had at last brought their resources nearly to a state of  
 nihilation—even to an admission on their own part, that they had  
 t out of the country five-sixths of the specie.—In fact, they had  
 ried on the war, not by means of a tax on their capital, but  
 th the whole capital itself: such were the extraordinary exertions  
 the enemy. Supposing the war to be, what the House has already  
 ided it to be, just, wise, and necessary, it was necessary that  
 ey should proportion their exertions to those of the enemy. The  
 ountable gentleman had admitted, that the four first years of the  
 merican war were not those which should be taken in order to  
 mpare with the present: he would therefore state the four last  
 ars, and shew that the comparison was in favour of the present  
 ar. The whole expences of America and Holland in the last  
 ar, and of all the allies put together, would not amount to that  
 the French in the present war. In calculating what those  
 ere, he granted it would be difficult to find a criterion: for to  
 ckon by their assignats, in their present depreciated state, would  
 idle. During the reign of Roberfpierre, when the assignats  
 ere at par, the expences of France were eighty millions sterling

each year. In order to ascertain as nearly as possible the comparative expenses of the present war, he would state those of the last. The four last years of the American war cost forty millions and a half, to which was to be added the unfunded debt amounting to twenty millions—in all sixty-four millions and a half, while the whole expenses of the present war amounted to only five millions.—At the winding up of the war it might, perhaps, be seventy millions, which would be so inconsiderable in comparison over the American, that, considering the increased price of everything, and the very extended plan on which the war was obliged to be carried on, the management with respect to expence must appear to be much more economical. As to the present state of the country it was to be estimated by the state of the revenues and commerce. In every other war, the new taxes always failed to produce the amount at which they were stated—and the old taxes particularly fell off from the amount of their usual returns to the revenues. In an average of the three years of the war the difference between permanent taxes was only 246,000*l.* and the new taxes were at least equal every year to what they had been stated. So that the House would see the country bore up against the burdens of war more than ever. The commerce of the country was in a still more satisfactory—It stood thus :

The exports, taking the three last years of peace, the greatest period of commerce the country ever knew before, the average of each year was	—	—	—	£. 22,585
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The average of the last three years of the present war	—	—	—	24,453
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That the exports of the war exceed those of the best years of peace, annually	—	—	—	1,868
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Exports for the average of the three best years of peace, as before,	—	—	—	19,286
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Average of three last years war,	—	—	—	20,964
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The excess of the war over peace.	—	—	—	1,678
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To that, under the additional debt, and all the pressure of the revenues were as great as ever, and the commerce of the country had considerably increased. The next subject the honourable gentleman had touched upon, was the mode of borrowing money. On this he would reply, that if his right honourable friend had borrowed at a higher interest than loans formerly bore, it would not be to be wondered at, since the loans being greater, and

of the nation having accumulated; it was natural that greater interest should be demanded. Yet, comparing the loans with those of the American war, they would be found at one per cent. less interest. In every other war, too, the sinking fund was destroyed; whereas, in this, measures were taken by his right honourable friend to appropriate a fund for the due payment of the sums raised. In every other war there was a large unfunded debt—in this there was no debt left unfunded. The honourable gentleman had stated, in warm terms of approbation, what had been done in former times. Mr. Jenkinson declared he was disposed to do all possible justice to those good times, as the honourable gentleman called them; but when they were stated in disadvantageous comparison with the measures of his right honourable friend, he must freely speak fact. The national debt, hesitated, in the war subsequent to the Revolution; it then amounted to fifty millions; after that the successive war raised it up to one hundred and forty millions; but had they had in those good days the sound, provident policy of his right honourable friend, and applied one per cent. for the discharge of it, the country would not now have to complain of its accumulated pressure; the only debt would be that of the American war, and even that, with the same attention, would be less than this. What not only neither the whig administration of Queen Anne, nor all the subsequent Ministers up to Lord North himself had even done, his right honourable friend did; and posterity would do him the justice which some gentlemen denied him now, and declare, with exultation, that, while they groaned under the debts accumulated in former wars—those good times as they were called, this war of 1793, which they (divested of party rancour and party prejudice) will consider as the most just, the most wise, and the most necessary war in which the country was ever engaged, had been defrayed without leaving a shilling expence upon them. It could not be denied that wars, if inevitable and necessary, are necessary for posterity as much as for ourselves. In preserving ourselves, we preserve posterity; for what would be our ruin, would certainly be theirs. From a conviction of the truth of this proposition, he did not think the funding system unjust. But the highest credit was due to that Minister, who stepped beyond the mere line of justice, and lightened the burden to posterity; and such was the praise of his right honourable friend. His right honourable friend had been censured for taking the loan in the 3½ per cents; but when, according to his system, they were not only paying the interest but diminishing the principal, it was certainly advantageous to prefer the small interest and the large capital. As to the assertion made by

the honourable gentleman that the expenditure was extravagant when compared with the service done, he would, without fear of the result, take a comparison with any war, and undertake to show that greater exertions had been made in proportion to the expense in this than any other war before ; that there were more men brought into the field, and more ships set on float. The ships put in commission were no less than three hundred and fourteen—that is to say, 54 more than were in the whole American war : besides, those there was a much greater proportion of large ships than before. And there were not less than 217,206 men. Though every article whatever was increased in price, they had a larger force at no more the same expence as in the American war. Besides, this war was different in the scale of its exertions. From its nature it was continental ; and the exertions of France in naval and landed operations were greater than ever was known ; so that England had not a greater maritime, but a greater land war to carry on than at any former period. To those wonderful exertions was to be added the expence of the subsidies. And here he would say, that it was a mistake to consider all the naval successes as attributable merely to the navy ; a great share of it must be imputed to the continental exertions. A great statesman had given it as his decided opinion, and dictated the reason of the thing obviously, that when at war with France, engaging the continental powers in our favour was politic ; not simply as a diversion in favour of the operations of our fleets, but as a means of compelling France to throw her resources into land force, and thereby to prevent her making great maritime exertions. He therefore maintained, that there was no prodigious expence in subsidies, compared with the benefit derived from them. An Austrian loan had been called impolitic ; and some gentlemen were gone so far as to say that a subsidy would have been better ; but he had the satisfaction to say, those opinions were already founded on groundless : the interest had been punctually paid ; and the guarantee of this country for the sum was not so impolitic ; for the exertions of Austria had already produced effects that were more than a price for it. The debt at present unfunded, he granted, was large, but it had been already provided for—and it would have been no more than candid in the honourable gentleman to have stated so. And here he would submit to the House, whether it was possible to carry on an extensive, complicated war, by precise estimates—and above all wars this, in which estimates must utterly fail, from the varied form and number of expeditions necessarily to be carried on, in order to counteract the vast and diversified operations of the enemy—for never was war carried on in so many different



rent quarters. As to the barracks, the accounts were given in annually for five or six years, so that the House was aware of and had given their sanction to them. The amount did not exhibit any marks of extravagance. The expences were necessarily great, as being for a new system approved by the House, and carried into execution at once. The honourable gentleman had asked, "what had we gained for this great expence?" He would remind the House, that the honourable gentleman and his right honourable friend had been at first averse to the war: but war having been determined on by the wisdom of the House, they then insisted that the war should have nothing to do with the internal affairs of France, and called on Ministers to direct it to national objects only. To have witnessed the extraordinary and unprecedented successes we have had with respect to those objects, and not to be satisfied, was surely very strange and inconsistent in the honourable gentlemen on the other side. To refresh their memory, however, and do his duty to the House, he would state what we had gained:—"The navy of France never suffered so much, nor had the navy of Great Britain ever gained so much—never was a war at once so glorious and beneficial to Great Britain." The honourable gentleman seemed to hold in great contempt the acquisition of the Cape of Good Hope—the Dutch possessions in India, the strong holds we had got in St. Domingo, and still more the Isle of Martinique, the most important to us of any we could acquire in the West-Indies, and attended as it is with local and natural advantages for a naval power; inasmuch that the Marquis de Bouille attributed to our possession of it all the successes we had in the West-Indies. Neither did the honourable gentleman seem to think of the accession of Corsica to the dominions of the British Empire. But upon the simple statement of the ruin of the French navy, the consequent addition to our own he would confidently rest, and the acquisitions gained from the enemy, his assertion, that this was as glorious a war as Great Britain, or any other nation, had ever carried on. The honourable gentleman had inveighed against the confidence reposed by Parliament in His Majesty's Ministers, and if he Mr. Grey and his right honourable friend were to be believed, we were now in a most degenerate state, with respect to political freedom; but without meaning to censure former times, he would mention, that in the reigns of George the First and George the Second, much more confidence was reposed in Ministers; at one period, after ten years of peace, one million and a half was voted for secret services, the Commons requesting an account of it, the King refused to comply with their request, and they were satisfied. Nothing in the present

period could be produced equal to that instance of confidence which he had now quoted. In fine, he maintained, that for the twelve years, this country had more political liberty, and the people a greater share in the Constitution than ever they had. He therefore, being convinced of the fallacy of the grounds on which the honourable gentleman built his motion, would give his voice against it.

Mr. CURWEN said, that after the very able speech of the honourable friend who made the motion, he would intrude himself upon the House but for a short time. He confessed himself more surprised than satisfied by any thing that had fallen from the honourable gentleman who had just sat down. If the example of France led to desperation, as the honourable gentleman asserted, he was much afraid the conduct of Ministers would soon bring us very near to that situation, for it was not possible to guess, far less to foresee the fatal consequences that might ensue from a perseverance in the line of conduct which they had uniformly pursued since the commencement of the war. He had listened attentively to the honourable gentleman's speech, and could have wished to have heard him justify upon fair grounds, that system, so ably reprobated by the honourable friend. When the conduct of France formed the object of continual abuse, it became a fair question to consider, whether we had on our own part made those exertions which we had the means of doing, and whether the accounts on the table were fairly and properly made out? These were important points, and called for inquiry. What could a member of Parliament say, when he went into the country amongst his constituents, after having imposed additional burdens upon them, without being able to tell how the money voted was applied, or to afford them the least satisfaction to the real state of the nation? Such was their situation now, no inquiry was granted. It was this sort of conduct that made the people dissatisfied with the management of public affairs and reduced them to have no trust or confidence in their representatives. During the American war it had been thought necessary to institute Committees of Inquiry, because the expences of the war were deemed to be improvident and misapplied. If that was the case when the amount was only nine millions, what could justify resisting inquiry now, when the amount was more than double that sum? As to the boasted acquisitions which the honourable gentleman had dwelt upon, he fairly owned that he considered most of them, not all, as misfortunes; he rather wished that some system could be pursued that would keep us entirely rid of colonization, which he always thought tended to weaken the country, and would finally

minate in its ruin. He wished gentlemen had shewn how the men destroyed and the money expended during this war, both on the Continent and in the West-Indies, as well as the many ill-conceived and worse executed plans, had been productive of public benefit; sure he was it would not appear that any adequate advantage to the country was the result. He denied that continental wars had ever either been useful to this country, or had answered the purposes for which they were undertaken. He had always been against this war from the commencement, although he would have wished to protect Holland. But while the French were kept at bay there, peace might have been negotiated on terms equally honourable and advantageous to ourselves. He thought this was a moment when the country ought to know their real situation, and when the Ministers ought, of all others, to be most forward in wanting so fair an inquiry as that demanded by his honourable friend, and not to obstinately push forward in a system of delirium, from point to point, till they had completely ruined the country. He was pointedly severe on the erection of barracks, and the enormous amount of the expences, as stated by the estimates both for those already built and those intended to be erected. In such an alarming and critical situation was the country now placed, that he would be deficient in his duty if he did not speak out fairly. Should Ministers persist in the line of conduct they had pursued, they would compel the people to speak for themselves, not from any love of French principles, but from the burdens, calamities, and distresses of a ruinous and expensive war. And if all inquiry was to be resisted as it had been, it was of no consequence for the representatives of the people to call themselves such, or to remain there; perhaps they might do better to retire.

Mr. M. MONTAGU defended the war, both in its commencement and in the manner in which it was conducted, though he was conscious that on so delicate a subject he was taking the unpopular side of the question. He entirely approved of the measures which Ministers had pursued. War was always, he admitted, attended with great, and often unforeseen expences, but it was not essential with Ministers whether that expence was large or small; considering the resources and credit of the country, he thought much was due to them for the manner in which they had provided for the exigencies of the war; but great as those expences were, he intended with his honourable friend, that they did not much exceed the expenditure of the last four years of the American war; the period which he likewise agreed with his honourable friend was the only proper period from which to draw a comparison. He would



not say, while he praised the exertions of Ministers, that they on all occasions been successful, but they had been so to a degree much greater than under the circumstances of the times could be expected. By a continuance of those spirited exertions the French must at last be brought to their senses. The Ministers of this country were placed in an arduous situation, and they had not shrunk from it. If men were insincere they might dupe him, still he was confident that Ministers were desirous of peace which could be had on honourable and advantageous terms for this country. If they were to be dismissed, and others appointed in their place, might tend to create a distraction and inefficacy, that rather would retard than forward negotiation; and he never could agree to a proposition to conclude a dishonourable peace. From all these considerations he was convinced that the war was necessary, that it would be expensive, that our exertions in many cases had been successful, and that he had no reason to believe that Ministers were insincere.

Sir GREGORY PAGE TURNER expressed the satisfaction he should feel in the return of peace, and had no doubt but Ministers would use every effort to obtain it upon safe and honourable terms. He avowed a firm belief in the good intentions of the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, he was certain, had the good of the country at heart. Was it not his wish to reduce the national debt? and was it not manifested by his financial measures for that purpose? He denied that the situation of our affairs was in that state in which they were represented. He referred to the state of the funds in 1777, and compared them to their price in the present year: In 1777, they were down at 54; they are now at 68. He marked the difference of 14 per cent. as an indication of our comparatively better situation. He admitted that the affairs of the nation stood in need of investigation; but shall we, said he, at this crisis, be driven into a Committee, and thereby be obliged to proclaim our poverty; shall we be compelled to go about like a very stinking fish! Scarce a week or ten days pass, but fresh motions are brought forward by gentlemen in Opposition, for the purpose of pestering and teasing Ministers, thereby impeding the progress of public business, and preventing the attainment of a safe and honourable peace, which he was convinced was an object which Ministers had most sincerely at heart---without producing any benefit to the country. The duty he owed the country, and the people at large, called upon him to deprecate the motion, on which he did not wish to give a silent vote. The country by persevering would again revive, and become, he hoped, a great and flourishing nation.

Mr. STEELE rose to make some observations upon what had been from the honourable gentleman who proposed the Committee Inquiry, concerning the raising of sums without the authority of Parliament, which was certainly entitled to some consideration. It is undoubtedly true the honourable gentleman was justified in asserting that the expences of the public services had of late years exceeded the estimates; but the amount was not equal to the honourable gentleman's statement, although it was not far short. The navy estimates were made at 15,000,000*l.* and the navy extraordinaries had, in the course of three years, amounted to 1,000,000*l.* The allowance of four pounds per month for every man was an allowance of long standing, but in it was included victualing and cloathing, and what is called wear and tear, and it had not for some years, been found equal to the expenditure, even in time of peace. Now if this sum was not sufficient in time of peace, it is impossible to expect that it should be so in time of war. The great causes of the excess in the time of war were the high prices of provisions, the price of naval stores, and the expence of transports. After the first year of the war, therefore, his right honourable friend, on opening the budget, had found it his duty to state the debt he had incurred in consequence of this excess, and the means which he had provided for discharging it, a duty which he had practised in every preceding year; and Mr. Steele thought himself justified in saying, that the House, by its proceedings upon the statements of his right honourable friend, had joined with him and given an indemnification and a sanction to what he had done. His right honourable friend had provided for the discharge of the whole of this 1,000,000*l.* of navy debt, except one million and a half, that is to say, in other words, eleven millions and a half of the excess were already provided for. On the opening of the budget in the present session, his right honourable friend had informed the House, that since the 30th of December, 1794, the navy debt had increased 1,500,000*l.* which was to be provided for, and the House acted upon this statement. After that information, therefore, he could not imagine his right honourable friend had proceeded without the authority of Parliament. In the account of the army debt his honourable gentleman had not been so fair as in that of the navy. In the estimates of the army he stated at 17,600,000*l.* which was provided for by the funded debt; and the extraordinary expences, unfunded debt, incurred during the last three years for the army, calculated at 9,000,000*l.* to which he added the Vote of Credit 2,500,000*l.* and the extraordinary expences of the ordnance, making in all a sum total of 14,000,000*l.* and upwards of

unfunded debt for the army, unauthorized by Parliament. However, was not the true state of the case; for the Vote of which he should speak more particularly by and bye, had the sanction of Parliament; and as the honourable gentleman himself had said, some of the expences were occasioned by the sums of the funded debt being in arrear, which was equivalent to a reduction. Of this nature had been an increase of the expenditure of the payment of bills drawn abroad to the amount of 5,500,000l. to be paid for out of the loan. This reduced the 14,000,000l. of the honourable gentleman's calculation below the original 9,000,000l. of the unfunded debt of the army, to which must be added 4 or 500,000l. (for he reckoned in round numbers, not precisely within 100,000l.) to be paid again by Mr. Pitt, and the 700,000l. saved upon the grants of 1793 and 1794, which will reduce the original 9,000,000l. to seven millions and a half. Comparing the 7,500,000l. therefore with the unfunded debt left to be provided for at the end of every former war, he thought it as his belief that we had expended less in extraordinary expences than in any former war whatever. He begged the House to observe that he stated this as his belief, that in former wars the sum required at the conclusion of the war to discharge the unfunded debt exceeded the amount. In the last war, when a Committee was appointed to inquire into the expences and conduct of the war, the Committee did object in strong language to the contracting of debts without the authority of Parliament, and yet no provision was made in 1783 with respect to the contracting of such debts in future. When the act even was passed for the regulation of the conduct of the Paymaster, although these extraordinary expences were expressly recognized, no clause was introduced to prevent them, nor any farther notice taken of them; and hence it was but reasonable for him to conclude that they thought it might be inconvenient for the public service to put them under the express regulation. It had been next contended by the honourable gentleman, that this was a direct violation of the law of appropriation, which he considered as a misdemeanor. If his right honourable friend had violated the Appropriation act, he had done no more than his predecessors had done before him. There had always been the same disregard to the Appropriation act, and the same practice had been continued in use in 1782, and for years antecedent to the passing of the act, and it still continued in 1783, and had remained so ever since. By the Appropriation act, certain sums were to be estimated and provided for under such and such heads, but there had always been certain expences incurred, which were afterwards brought



ment, under the head of extraordinary expences; and as they  
ways been justified and approved by Parliament, he did not  
at any blame could be attached to his conduct in the present  
ce. By borrowing sums in 1795, Government was able to  
f 2,600,000l. upon the grants of 1795. That sum had  
already voted by Parliament, and repaid to the army, and  
the addition of the farther extraordinaries that may be voted,  
dged himself that there would be money more than sufficient  
y the whole of the army, and not leave sixpence in arrear.  
as to the present arrears, he granted, that to the staff of 1793,  
, and 1795, large sums had been due. Of these sums,  
er, there only remained 1900l. unpaid for 1793, and  
ool. for 1794, and when those sums were paid, there would  
arrear whatever in the army. The cause of these arrears  
mple, which he briefly stated, lest the House should enter-  
n idea that the whole of the staff establishment had been in  
. Persons on the Continent and in the West-Indies, have  
a claim for payments when due, upon the Deputy Pay-  
rs, but as claims were at the same time made at home by  
agents, it became absolutely necessary to delay payments at  
until Government was assured there had been none abroad.  
w begged leave to say a word or two upon the vote of credit.  
d been urged that that sum was misapplied, and that it was  
to answer unforeseen demands during the recess. This he  
d. He allowed that it was not usual to bring forward a vote  
redit till after the Committee of Supply closed, and at a later  
of the session; but though, during the American war, a  
of credit of 1,000,000l. was never brought forward till the  
a of June, nor passed, perhaps, till the month of July, yet it  
een applied six months antecedent to that period. In fact, the  
ates and the vote of credit have made but one purse, as his  
honourable friend said upon a former evening, and both are  
use of indiscriminately for the general expences. By the  
g of a vote of credit bill you have authority to raise two mil-  
and a half without any specific mode of application, only you  
esponsible to Parliament to shew how it has been applied,—  
has been the constant practice. It was the practice of last  
when the mode of application was laid before Parliament, as  
uld have been also in this session, but that the account was not  
ready; and that the practice of laying the account of the appli-  
n of a vote of credit before Parliament has usually been at a  
period of the session. In regard to barracks, 440,000l. had  
expended, and 170,000l. incurred since, and it would require

150,000*l.* more to complete them. Of this money for  
been expended for temporary accommodations before the erect  
permanent barracks for the reception of the troops, otherw  
towns and villages would have been subjected to much inco  
ence. What apprehensions were entertained in that House  
the French over-ran Holland of an invasion of this country,  
posed he needed not to revert to the debates of that day to r  
gentlemen's recollection. The necessity of some temporary  
modations was at that time pretty evident, and he had further  
to state, that in addition to the expence incurred by erecting th  
racks, the expence of furnishing certain articles to the troop  
included in the accounts. It was not necessary for him to t  
more time than to recapitulate what he had stated. He d  
with brevity and precision, observing at the same time, that  
six millions of Exchequer bills issued for the discharge of t  
funded debt, five million and a half were in circulation bet  
war. In respect to the future extraordinary expences he wo  
undertake to state what the probable amount might be, but i  
were provided for them, it was the same thing to the Public.  
the whole, therefore, if the honourable gentleman would co  
the actual expence of the present war with the actual expence  
former war, except that of 1778, he would find them so  
each other that there was but little difference. Upon the q  
itself he would just say a word or two. It was a common  
with gentlemen on the other side when they brought any acc  
forward, to exclaim, if you do not admit the fact, give us a  
mittee to institute an inquiry. He hoped such would not  
practice on this occasion, He left it to the decision of the  
whether the grounds produced were substantial enough to b  
inquiry upon. By the funding of navy and Exchequer b  
thought the extraordinary expences were provided for, and  
respect to their being incurred without authority, while Parl  
was informed from year to year, and from time to time,  
amount of the debt, he thought their acquiescence fully sanc  
the proceeding. Of that they were to judge. The subject  
vast importance, as it related to the peculiar power of the H  
Commons over the public purse, and it was of equal impo  
how they decided upon it, that the Public might not be led t  
gine, if a Committee of Inquiry was granted, it was upon a con  
of misconduct. Upon this ground he objected to the original n  
conceiving that the new taxes would be sufficiently productiv  
only to complete the estimates, but to cover the unfunded deb  
cept to the amount of two millions.



M. ROBINSON said, that the vote of this night would whether the people had any control over their representatives; temporary barracks he was afraid would be found permanent, the people controlled by a military force when it would be too late to be redressed. Loans he thought a most dangerous mode of raising money for individuals, and procuring support to the Government. Public money he thought had been expended in a very improper manner in the navy: instead of producing any benefit, a system was introduced which would occasion much neglect in the naval department. GREGORY PAGE TURNER rose to explain, but not getting into explanation, was informed by the Speaker, that he was not in order.

GREY noticed the various arguments brought against his motion in a reply of which the following is the substance.—Sir, my full statement with which I prefaced my motion, affords I think a sufficient security against my adding much in the way of reply. Indeed, from the turn which the debate has taken, I do not feel any great reason to trouble the House much at length. There are, however, some points, which have been urged by gentlemen on the other side, to which I must advert. Before I offered my statement to your attention, I took all the pains in my power, to introduce into the subject which I meant to bring forward. The result of my inquiries was such, as completely to satisfy my own mind in the conclusions which I have drawn. But as the matter was new

I still conceived, that even after the fullest investigation on the subject, there would remain much room for explanation on the other side; and that there would be many points in my statement, which would be liable to be controverted. I now feel much pride and satisfaction, that not only the leading points of my statement have not been attempted to be controverted, but have been implicitly admitted and acknowledged to be true. As it is not my intention to introduce into my reply any matter extraneous to the question, my honourable gentleman (Mr. Jenkinson) will excuse me, if without meaning any personal incivility to him, I do not feel it at all necessary to notice the greater part of his speech. To the question which I immediately brought before the House, he did not say that it required an answer. If I had argued the principle of the war, if I had insisted on the best mode of making a loan, if I had gone any farther, and stated any thing respecting the Austrian loan, my reply which he gave, would then have been perfectly proper. Having studiously avoided all those points, in order to call the undivided attention of the House to a topic of the most serious importance, and solely to press, what I consider as the strong and ur-

gent case which imperiously calls for inquiry—the state of the expence of the country, I must confess, that the topics chosen by the honourable gentleman chose principally to enlarge, were entirely applicable. I can easily, however, perceive the circle from which he has been led into this mode of treating the subject. When I gave notice of a motion respecting the finances of the country, the honourable gentleman naturally supposed, that I would furnish myself with materials from an admirable pamphlet lately published on that topic, and was, in consequence led to prepare an answer to that pamphlet. [Mr. Grey here alluded to the pamphlet entitled, “ Facts, addressed to the serious attention of the House of Great Britain, respecting the expence of the war and the state of the national debt; by William Morgan, F. R. S.—Printed by J. Debrett, in Piccadilly.”] It happened, however, though I confess myself greatly indebted for information to the profound and ingenious author, that I did not much avail myself of the substance of that pamphlet, nor follow the particular tract of discussion which he has there so ably prosecuted. The only thing like an answer to my statements, which he at all attempted, occurred in the latter part of the honourable gentleman’s speech, in which he compared the expences of the four last years of the American war, to the expences of the present war. This he insisted to be the proper mode of comparison. By the bye, he did not advert that in drawing this comparison from the four last years of the American war, he took too large a scale of time, as hitherto the present war has only lasted for three years. The proper period of comparison began with the year 1778. It was incredible with what rapidity the disbursements of the succeeding years of the present war had been mounted up, and how large a proportion they rose above one another. The expence of the supply in 1793, was 4,500,000*l*. In the following year it rose to eight and eleven millions. The whole extra expence of the last years of the American war was some millions short of what had already been incurred in the present war. This fact the honourable gentleman was obliged to omit. He affected to treat the subject as a matter of trivial consequence, and to wonder that the expence of the present contest had not exceeded, in a larger proportion, that of the American war. I desire the House to attend to the subject of this defence. It is admitted as an incontrovertible fact, and is to be considered as matter of surprise and congratulation, that the expence in the present war, is only in a certain proportion greater than that of the American war. The American war, which has been held out as unexampled in point of extravagance and dissipation, which has been recognized as such by the House,

a generally and strongly reprobated in the country, and which has been pointedly and forcibly arraigned by the right honourable gentleman himself. If Ministers are contented to rest their conduct on such a defence, I freely leave them to enjoy all the satisfaction which they must derive from such a vindication. If such are the grounds on which they lay claim to merit, I envy them not that share of praise which must attach to their conduct. I leave to them the full merit of economy, which more than serves for an apology for the most unbounded extravagance of former times. But, Oh! then we are told of our great exertions, of our unparalleled efforts in the present contest; of our immense means, and of our extended scale of operations. We are told also of the prodigious exertions, and enormous expenditure of the enemy. We are told that they have expended no less than 240 millions in the present contest, as if the expenditure of the enemy formed any criterion to regulate the expenses of this country. This mode of arguing proceeds from a gross misconception of gentlemen on the other side. They mistake extravagance for exertion, and profusion for activity. They estimate the importance of the service by the magnitude of the expense, and seem to think that they have sufficiently proved how much has been done, when they have shewn how much has been expended. Fortunately this mode of argument, in the present instance, is not only entirely inapplicable, but the reverse of the conclusion, which, they would insinuate, is actually the case. For the enormous expense which has been incurred to the country, no service whatever has been done. We have indeed an immense army, on paper, though, I believe, if we look to the real number of effective men, we shall find a considerable diminution. But if we have this immense army on foot, it may be asked, where are they? Are they occupied in the internal defence of the country, or engaged in foreign operations? Where are we to trace the progress of their activity, or witness the effects of their exertion? Is this army of countless thousands concealed at Brentford, unmarked by the eye of publicity, unknown in the scene of action, pining in inglorious and unprofitable indolence? Where was this army last year, when its services might be supposed to be wanted? I do not now mean to discuss the utility of diversions on the continent, I will even admit that such diversions may not only be extremely serviceable to the common cause, but particularly beneficial to the interests of this country. But last year we had no diversion on the continent. We had no army in Flanders, nor in any other quarter, except we are to give that name to the two thousand men who were ignominiously driven out of Hanover, and forced to skulk about Bremersee, hanging-



ing their heads till such time as the transports were ready to them to this country. In the American war, as I have stated, the case was different; we had then a large army in America, offensive and active; we had a large army in the West we had also an army engaged in the defence of Gibraltar, they so gallantly maintained against the united force of the and Spaniards. Thus far I have thought necessary to not only argument of the honourable gentleman, which applied immediate question. As another honourable gentleman (Mr. Montagu) went entirely into a general argument respecting war, it will not be necessary for me to advert to any of the which he advanced. The honourable Baronet who succeeded (Sir Gregory Page Turner) pursued a different course. Entertaining the opinion which he does, he undoubtedly felt himself to be in the censure which he took occasion to pass on the conduct in position. How far the charge, "That they were continually bringing the House with motions to no effect" was either decimated or properly applied, it is for the House, and not for me to decide. As to the particular point, "That these motions in the House were without effect," to the truth of the fact I must submit and leave to the honourable Baronet all the benefit of the comparison. If he pleases to bring the charge against me, to that charge I will patiently submit. I assure the honourable Baronet, that no such any imputation will prevent me from pursuing that line of conduct which I think calculated to put the Public in possession of information respecting the real state of the country. Whatever result such motions may experience in this House, their effect will not be lost, if they shall tend to open the eyes of the country at large to inspire a proper sense of reflection with respect to their representation. As to the honourable gentleman, (Mr. Steele) who has last on that side of the question, he admitted all the leading points of my estimate to be accurate, and differed only as to a few particulars. He says, that provision has been made for the discharge of the debt. I want to know what provision is made for that purpose. For my own part I know of none. I admit, indeed, that the honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in bringing forward his budget, talked of funding five millions of navy debt. He also of appropriating the sum arising from the lottery, to defray the interest of that service. It is a principle universally recognized, indeed in its own nature incontrovertible, that every addition to public expence ought to be provided for by a permanent article of revenue. But who ever considered the lottery as coming under that description, or dreamt of applying it to such a purpose? The

as never been set down under the head of permanent revenue, nor can it properly be so classed. It is a fund, with respect to the expediency of which much difference of sentiment has been entertained, but which has always been only available for incidental claims, and cases of emergency. But whatever may be alledged on this head, will it not be admitted that a great sum of navy debt must be brought to account, whenever the accounts come to be settled?

I now come to a subject, which falls more directly under his knowledge, namely, what he stated respecting the army. The estimated service on this head during the war, amounts to seventeen millions, and the extraordinaries to nine millions. Out of this sum, the honourable gentleman contends, that a saving of a million and a half ought to be deducted. This is granting my general statement to be true, and also admitting that the extraordinaries of the war amount to seven millions and a half. Well, said Mr. Grey, I will take it even upon this supposition, which I intend however not to be correct. During the years 1778-79-80 the American war, the extraordinaries only amounted to five millions. So that even upon the honourable gentleman's own shewing, the extraordinaries of the army during the present war, are two millions and a half greater than those incurred in the same period of the American war. In return for this enormous expence, I call upon him to shew me what has been done. What expedition has been undertaken, of which Ministers have not had cause to be ashamed in the result? What acquisition has been made to the country, if we except those possessions which have been taken from the Dutch. Paltry gratification indeed for the national pride! We stated, that the great object of the war was to save Holland and its dependencies; and now as a compensation for all the defeats we have sustained, for all the sacrifices we have made, we are to satisfy ourselves with the plunder of our former ally. But I am now to shew, that the deduction for which the honourable gentleman contends, ought not to be made. This deduction ought to be set against the sums which are now owing. Let me suppose the estimated service fairly provided for; so much has been voted by the House; a certain saving has occurred, but an equivalent sum is now owing; it is evident that the one can only be considered as covering the other, and not as a solid acquisition to the public purse. But I will not dispute for trifles. In an account of such magnitude, a sum of a million and a half may be accounted a trifle, and may be but little noted in the magnificent scale of expenditure adopted by Ministers, however seriously such a sum might have formerly been deemed to call for the attention of the House. Re-

peated and unbounded profusion ceased to create surprize. certain period, it failed even to attract notice; already this millions had been expended on the estimated services of the and twenty-nine millions on the extraordinaries; an enormous this last, if it was considered that it was applied to objects the knowledge and consent of Parliament. On this ground the object to granting money by vote of credit, since the money granted never comes directly into the contemplation of Parliament and but seldom comes under their discussion. The honorable gentleman says that a vote of credit is an admirable mode of proceeding! that is, only an authority to raise a sum of money which may afterwards be applied to any service, no matter what, provided it be brought before Parliament. But I desire him to look at the letter of the act of Parliament. A vote of credit is only applied to those unforeseen emergencies, which may arise in the current year. It is only to have a prospective influence, and is not to be diverted to other purposes, or to cover the deficiencies of former years. Against such an abuse I will ever raise my voice, and exert the little influence of which I may be possessed. It is in vain to urge to me that such at all times has been the practice of Ministers; if the practice is bad, it ought not to be continued. At any rate, either the law or the practice ought to be abolished. At present, the practice is in direct violation of the law, and partakes of all the guilt and the meanness of an attempt to raise money by fraudulent prettexts. Why should the Chancellor of the Exchequer not present the estimate of the whole of the service? Why should it be necessary to borrow from any branch of the public service, in order to cover an expence, which could have been obtained in the first instance? It was highly unjustifiable to apply the money granted for one service, what was granted for another. Here Mr. C. referred to the Appropriation act, and moved, "That the following Resolutions of the House, of the 15th day of May 1711, be taken into consideration, it appears to this House, that the sum of six hundred thousand eight hundred six pounds, seven shillings, and seven pence hath been paid out of the monies issued to the service of the navy for provisions supplied to land forces, sent to Spain and Portugal, and for the garrison of Gibraltar, for which no deduction hath been made from the pay of the forces, nor any part of the money assigned to the victualing, notwithstanding the several letters and representations, made to the Treasury in that behalf;" and then he moved, "That such diverting of monies, issued to the service of the navy to the land service, hath lessened the credit of the navy, diminished the pay of the seamen, occasioned the paying extravagant rates on the



tracts, and was a misapplication of the public money," might read. And the same was read accordingly. Our ancestors were so careless of the disposal of public money; they were not inclined readily to comply with the demands, and so implicitly to confide in the discretion of Ministers. On a sum of much less importance than those which I have now brought forward, they passed that Resolution, to which I now request your attention. Exactly, said Mr. Grey, in the point of view which this Resolution states, do I consider the recent practices of Ministers as injurious to the national credit, and a misapplication of public money. But the honourable gentleman seemed to pay no more attention to the very act, which had originated from his own office, than to the general law on the subject. By that act it was provided, that the cloathing half-yearly issued to the army, should be regularly paid. In the disposition of the sum it was accordingly put down as paid, while in reality the sum remained due. This was a species of fraud, which Parliament, consistently with that regard which they owed to their own honour and to the interests of the country, ought no longer to suffer to pass unnoticed. I am aware, that it is impossible that all accounts can be provided for by estimate in the first instance. But every precaution ought to be taken, to keep the extraordinaries in as low a proportion as possible. In the present war the amount infinitely exceeds that of all former extraordinaries, and is out of all estimate. This fact surely of itself furnishes a strong ground for inquiry. Of the expence of the staff, which was also stated in the disposition of the sum, as paid, there remains yet a balance 16,000*l.* due so far back as 1794. There were several other points which I brought forward, of which no notice at all has been taken, and which I shall not now recapitulate. The honourable gentleman accused me of a wilful mis-statement respecting the amount of the money expended on barracks. I stated it to form a sum of 1,100,000*l.* from the authority of an intelligent friend, to whom I am chiefly indebted for information on that subject. Here Mr. Grey read the result of the different accounts, which altogether made a sum of one hundred thousand pounds. He remarked, that he had unfortunately mislaid one paper respecting the Ordnance barracks, which, in all probability, occasioned the difference from his former statement. With respect to the number of men for whom these barracks are built, I find that I am strictly accurate; they are calculated to accommodate a number not less than 40,000, a consideration truly alarming for the country. With respect to the article of the unfunded debt, I stated the amount of interest with which the country would be burdened, even after the happy period of the

return of peace. I took no unfair advantage ; I admitted the taxes of the right honourable gentleman would be fully adequate to their object ; I supposed no defalcation in the revenue, from the diminution in the consumption of those articles, from which the demand is created by the war. The whole amount of the direct taxes is seventeen millions ; the land and malt tax I set down at two millions and a half. Thus, at the return of peace, even supposing that no defalcation take place, there will still be a need to impose two millions of fresh taxes, in order to meet the interest. Let me again address the country gentlemen, though sensible of the pressure of the present taxes, they see their operations in the country, the means to which Government resorts in order to enforce them, the rigour which is exercised with respect to collectors, and the agency of a vile herd of informers. The poor and industrious class of farmers are the sufferers by that rigour, and the prey of those unprincipled informers. As an instance, lately in Northumberland, a farmer, who kept one riding-horse, for which he paid the tax, was subjected to a fine, because an informer saw his daughter riding to church on a cart horse, and the magistrate, though sensible of the hardship of the case, had not power to exempt him from the penalty. The operation of every tax increases the summary jurisdiction of the magistrates, and lessens the security of the people for their rights, by taking from them the benefit of trial by jury. Mr. Grey then recapitulated the object of his amendments. He concluded—It remains undoubtedly with the magistrates to exercise their discretion with respect to my motion. I sit down with the impression, that in bringing it forward I have discharged an important duty to the country. It has been insinuated that it is our duty to make the people think well of our resources, and that this motion has an opposite tendency. I, on the contrary, think that by declining to go into a Committee of Inquiry, we shall manifest an evident distrust of our situation, and sanction the most melancholy apprehensions with respect to our future prospects, whereas by boldly looking the state of our finances in the face, and carrying forward the result, we shall inspire more credit and confidence, than any measure of supply.

Mr. STEELE explained. The vote of credit now granted by the House would be sufficient to pay off all the arrears of the annuities under the head of extraordinaries up to the 31st December last.

Mr. GREY was glad to hear this fact ; but that did not alter the statement of the amount of the outstanding debt. Exchange bills might be issued to the present creditors.

Mr. MARTIN. I have heard this night so many reasons



inquiry, and not one against it, that I should be ashamed to  
 w my face in the present distressed state of the country, and  
 old think myself unworthy of a seat in this House as a repre-  
 sentative of the people, if I did not give the original motion my  
 ded support.

The House then divided,

Against Mr. Grey's motion 207

For it — — 45

Majority -- 162

List of the Minority, on Mr. Grey's motion.

Grey, Sir John	Langston, John, Esq.
Hay, George, Esq.	Lechmere, Edward, Esq.
Ing, John, Esq.	Lemon, Sir William
Jard, J. P.	Long, S.
Merie, Hon. Edward, Esq.	M'Leod, General
Merie, W. Esq.	Martin, James
Th, J. R. Esq.	Milner, Sir William
g, George	Milnes, R. S.
ton, Sir Robert	North, Dudley, Esq.
tenay, John, Esq.	Rawdon, Hon. John
pigny, T. C.	Ridley, Sir M. W.
patrick, Gen.	Robinson, Marcus
cher, Sir H.	Russell, Lord William
Right Hon. C. J.	St. John, Hon. St. Andrew
cis, Philip, Esq.	Smith, General
y, Charles, Esq.	Smith, William, Esq.
e, James, Esq.	Spencer, Lord Robert
ison, John	Tarleton, General
eywood, Francis, Esq.	Thompson, Thomas
ard, Henry, Esq.	Vyner, Robert, jun.
ey, William, Esq.	Vyner, Robert
pe, Thomas, Esq.	Western, C. C. Esq.
ght, R. P.	

TELLERS.

tbread, Samuel, jun. Curwen, J. C. Esq.

Friday, 11th March.

Mr. JODDRELL rose to move for leave to bring in a bill for  
 ng for anatomisation the bodies of persons executed for burglaries  
 felonies. He said that of late crimes of this nature had in-  
 creased in a most alarming manner, and required the serious atten-  
 tion of the legislature. He stated that the bill was founded upon  
 the model of an act of the 25th of George II. for the prevention  
 of murder, though he did not intend to adopt all the provisions of  
 that act. He considered that the dread of having their bodies disposed

of in the manner he proposed by the bill which he now moved to leave to bring in, would operate to the prevention of the particular species of crimes to which he alluded. He had consulted the highest authority in the criminal law, particularly Mr. Kenyon, and received the most flattering encouragement to do so. Besides the principal point he had in view, there was a secondary consideration of great weight, he meant the preventing of the burying of dead bodies. From his habits of thinking, and from his education, he entertained the utmost horror of this practice, and he lamented the fate of the bill brought in last year upon this subject. He hoped, however, that the present bill, by supplying a sufficient number for the purpose of anatomy, would produce the effects which that bill had in view. He concluded with a vote for leave to bring in a bill to the above effect.

Mr. BUXTON seconded the motion.

Mr. FRANCIS was inclined to think that what the hon. gentleman stated to be his secondary object, was the principal object on the present occasion. Perhaps, however, the bill might accomplish both purposes. The principal objection which appeared in his mind against the bill, was, that it tended to confound the distinction which crimes made upon the minds of mankind, by affixing the same punishment to unequal offences. He was averse to rate from annexing this additional punishment, for such it might be viewed, to simple robbery. In cases where attacks were made and wounds inflicted, although death did not ensue, such an addition might be made to the punishment, as a mark of greater severity, or in the case of nocturnal attempts of burglary, which was of a nature more criminal.

Serjeant ADAIR said, he now rose to oppose the bill in the present stage, as he would in every subsequent one, should it be allowed to proceed any farther; and he hoped he would be able to show that it was essential to the dignity of Parliament, and to the advantage of the public, not to encourage for a moment a measure which so much evil would result. It had been an observation made by all versant with the criminal justice of this country, that the great defect of our criminal code consisted in confounding the gradations of crimes, removing the distinction of enormity, and the proportion of their punishment. He could not think of adding what the proposed bill would do, to the severity of the punishment of death, in cases where the punishment of death ought not to be inflicted at all. In the various cases of burglary the same punishment was provided by the law. A ragged boy, on the 2nd of December, cutting a hole in a pane of glass and drawing out a

ers to the value of two-pence, would be found guilty of burglary, by the law punished with death. Was the person who took only shillings, without committing any violence, to be compared to the nocturnal, way-laying murderer? Were the obvious moral distinctions of these crimes to be confounded and held forth to the people, as meriting the same severity of punishment? He thought the distinction which the bill meant to extend to other crimes, should be reserved as the peculiar attendant of the punishment of murder, with regard to which it was wise to maintain a greater degree of horror and dread. The disgraceful multiplicity of crimes equally punished with death was no reason for affixing an additional degree of severity. He was not such an enthusiast for the promotion of the science of anatomy, as to advance it at such a price and by such means. The other object might be a good one; but he could not promote it, consent to break down that barrier which God's nature had established between murder and other crimes. This might contribute to increase murder, by removing one great motive to deter criminals from committing it when they committed the crime of robbery. Upon the whole the proposed bill appeared objectionable, that he could not think the House would be disposed at all to entertain it. He had now only said a few words against it; but if necessary he would afterwards state his objections at greater length.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL regretted that he had not known that this subject was to be agitated, that he might have been in his power to inquire the reasons which induced the persons from the honourable gentleman had alluded, to give the opinion he had stated. He was convinced that they did not hold such an opinion as had been ascribed to them without considerable doubt. He thought that the bill would confound that distinction between murder and other crimes which ought carefully to be maintained. He thought murder the only case where an aggravation of punishment should be admitted, and upon this ground he opposed the bill to bring in the bill.

Mr. FOX said if the period should arrive when the honourable learned gentleman opposite to him, (Attorney General) and the honourable and learned friend near him, (Serjeant Adair) should devote their time to the amendment of that part of the criminal law which was so justly complained of, it would be an æra equally honourable to the country, and conducive to the safety of individuals. The point on which his opposition to the proposed bill rested, was, that it annihilated the distinction between murder and other crimes, which was so essential to inspire just impressions of guilt.

General SMITH thought that some additional prevent highway robbery was required, though he could not agree bill in the utmost extent to which it was to be carried.

Mr. I. HAWKINS BROWNE opposed it, as tending to found the distinctions of crimes.

Mr. COURTENAY thought it would increase murder, out diminishing the number of felonies and burglaries.

Mr. JODDRELL said, that he would not push the subject the sense of the House seemed to be against his motion. He acted from the most conscientious motives of duty; but he that the learned gentlemen who had opposed him would direct attention to remedy the defects of which they complained, meet the alarming evil he had stated to exist.

The motion was rejected without a division.

Mr. CURWEN moved for the House to resolve itself Committee upon the game laws, when Mr. Wallace opposed Speaker leaving the chair, upon which a conversation ensued between Mr. Buxton, Mr. Cox, Mr. Francis, Sir John Rous Curwen, and Sir Robert Salusbury, and the House divided,

Ayes	-	-	36
Noes	-	-	27

Majority 9.

The House then went into a Committee, Mr. Braddyll chair.

Mr. CURWEN then moved a resolution, that the game are oppressive in their nature, and inadequate in their provision.

Mr. I. H. BROWNE objected to the resolution, upon score of this being an improper time to agitate any species of reform.

Mr. FOX observed, that his honourable friend had been unfairly dealt with on this question. He had first brought in for the regulation of the game laws, when the House advised to abandon that mode, and discuss them in a Committee. To proposition he had assented, and now he was informed that was not the time for discussion. He recommended his honourable friend therefore to withdraw the resolution and proceed upon his original plan, by bringing in a bill and passing it through the House in a regular way.

Mr. CURWEN accordingly withdrew the resolution, and requested that the Chairman do ask leave to bring in a bill to repeal the laws for the preservation of the game.

The resolution was put and carried, the Chairman brought



report, leave was given to bring in the bill, and Mr. Braddyll and Mr. Curwen were ordered to prepare and bring in the same.

Mr. ROBERT DUNDAS moved for the copies of a couple of bills passed in the Assembly at Jamaica, relative to the importation of negroes, to be laid upon the table.—Ordered.

Mr. WILBERFORCE moved for the order of the day on Monday to take into consideration the Report of the Committee on the petition for the abolition of the slave trade, to be discharged, and ordered for Tuesday next; and he intimated, that on Thursday or Friday following he should move for the third reading.

Mr. DENT wished to have the consideration protracted, on account of the illness of Mr. Dundas.

The order of the day was discharged; but on the motion for the consideration on Tuesday the House divided, when it was found that there were only two and twenty Members, and the House adjourned on Monday.

*Monday, 14th March.*

Mr. WILBERFORCE moved that the report of the slave-trade-abolition bill should be taken into consideration to-morrow.

General SMITH wished it to be postponed on account of the absence of Mr. Dundas through indisposition.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said that his honourable friend did not wish the subject to be postponed on account of his absence; but, not present, he would deliver his sentiments on the third reading.

Mr. DENT said he could not allow the order to be renewed to-morrow without taking the sense of the House.

The House accordingly divided,

For the renewal	-	-	62
Against it	-	-	18

Majority - 44.

The Test Act Indemnification bill was read a first time.

Mr. CURWEN moved for an instruction to the Committee on the game laws to introduce a clause into the bill for altering and amending the old laws and making new provisions.

Agreed to.

General TARLETON presented a petition from the Mayor of Liverpool, and another from the inhabitants, against the abolition of the slave trade.—Ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. RYDER moved that the House resolve itself into a Com-

mittee of the whole House to-morrow, on the American Inter bill.

Mr. LECHMERE said, that on a future day he would for returns of the grain exported from the ports of Suffex and Hshire, particularly Southampton, in the years 1776 and and 1794 and 1795.

Mr. DENT's motion for a tax on dogs was put off till Th next.

General MACLEOD said, it was with much regret he his motion relative to the blood-hounds used against the Ma on account of the indisposition of Mr. Dundas; but on M next he would bring it forward.

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 15th March.*

The order of the day being read for taking into consideration report of the Committee on the bill for abolishing the slave

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG rose to give his most decided tion to this bill. He objected to it in every point of view in it could be considered: the principle of it was founded in in and every clause was replete with tyranny and oppression. dressed the House upon this subject with the strongest feelings felt for the West-India merchants and planters, who would signed to inevitable ruin, if this bill were to pass, and he his own property in the West Indies, of which this measure necessarily deprive him. He begged gentlemen would seriously sider what were the provisions which they were called upon to by this bill, and what were the means by which those provisions to be carried into execution. In the first place, in order to tate prosecutions under this act, the West Indies are to be ta be in the county of Middlesex, and therefore, in every profe the cause must be tried at that immense distance from the re of the planter; they must come into England, and leave a concerns, to defend every prosecution. This, in itself, ap to him to be a most intolerable hardship; but there was another greater, viz. the penalty imposed for the violation of this was no less than 14 years transportation to Botany Bay. T a severe punishment even upon a guilty man; but under th an innocent proprietor of land in the West Indies might be liable to it by the act of his overseer. He begged the House sider what must be the effect of such a sentence as that of r transportation to Botany Bay, to gentlemen of education, in society, of polished manners, and of extensive connection

desired to know if it would be consistent, either with justice or humanity, to expose them to it, merely from the misconduct or mistake of an overseer? For his own part, he would never knowingly counteract the laws of his country, but his innocence would afford him no defence to him under this act. Another point of view in which he wished this bill to be considered was, that it would operate as a general bill of foreclosure; large sums of money were lent in the West-India property; if that property was destroyed, in what manner were the mortgagees to be repaid, for the planters would not have it in their power to make due payments. He considered the bill as a very ungrateful return from this country to the colonies for the conduct they had pursued since the commencement of this war. The merchants and planters had evinced the utmost ardour in the public service, and large numbers of volunteer negroes were employed in defending the islands against the common enemy. He thought, that while gentlemen were so anxious to exercise justice towards the blacks in the West Indies, it would be but fair to shew the same to the whites, and not by such a bill as this to consign them and their families to ruin; he therefore objected to this measure as unjust in its principle, oppressive in its operation, and extremely problematical as to the attainment of its object; and he also objected to it, because it could not have the smallest tendency to diminish the chief complaint of; because, whether we carried on the trade or not, the negroes would certainly be taken from the coast of Africa.

General SMITH also professed himself adverse to the bill: he said, he had no individual interest in the question; he had no property in the West Indies; he therefore acted on this occasion merely from a sense of his duty as a Member of Parliament. He knew it was not a popular thing to oppose the abolition of this trade; he knew that every artifice had been used, to excite an unfair prejudice on this question; but he considered himself bound in conscience to meet that unpopularity, and speak his sentiments fairly. The gentlemen who were so anxious to abolish this trade, were constantly talking about humanity and justice; but there was another consideration, which, as Legislators, they should not forget, viz. Policy. Before he proceeded any farther, he should wish that some extracts from the statute of the 9th Anne might be read. [The Clerk read an extract from that statute, which was in favour of the slave trade.] This was the policy upon which our ancestors acted; but this policy was now to be entirely disregarded. He desired to know what new light had broken in upon us, which informed us that our ancestors, for a century past, had been acting totally without any re-

gard to justice or humanity? The wealth and prosperity of the country depended upon her commerce, and the trade with the Indies formed a very considerable part of it: Why then, he asked, were we now to sacrifice it? Was the Minister prepared to supply the defalcation of revenue which this abolition would occasion? Was he prepared with means to indemnify the merchants, planters, and their creditors, for the loss they must sustain by such a measure? It was very easy for gentlemen whose property was involved in this trade, to give their opinions against it; they might go home quietly and eat their dinners, because they suffered no loss; but he thought those who, upon the faith of Parliament, had engaged their property in it, were entitled to some consideration. It was said this trade was against justice and humanity; but every thing to be abolished, that was not consistent with humanity. To keep a poor wretch immured in a prison, for a debt which he was unable to pay; to press a man into the sea service, and other cases he could mention, were not quite consistent with humanity or justice, and yet they were suffered to exist. He would be informed for what purpose it was that this country was putting an expence of equipping and sending out a large armament to the Indies to attack the possessions of the enemy, if we were not to make any use of those possessions after we had acquired them. Much abuse had been thrown out against the planters on the score of their cruelty, &c. but the strongest proof, in his opinion, of the falsehood of these accusations was, the alacrity with which they turned out in defence of their masters and their property against the French. He should not go into the clauses and regulations of the bill; he disapproved of its principle, and should therefore vote his most decided negative.

Mr. FRANCIS.. Mr. Speaker, I really had no thought of taking part in this debate. My opinion of the slave trade was sufficiently known. But I confess, I have not patience to hear it. I have heard this day from the two honourable gentlemen who spoke last, without feeling indignation and endeavouring to contradict it. The honourable General introduced his speech with pretending that he had no property in the West-Indies, nor any connection with those who had. Allow me in my turn to declare that, I have no property in the islands, I once was intimately connected with some, who possessed a great deal. The person, I allude to, had no relations but in my family. Her personal fortune was very considerable. The succession to the greatest part of it would undoubtedly have gone, as in justice it ought to have done, to her own children, to whom she always expressed, as in common gratitude,



he ought to have felt, the warmest affection. Why was that and reasonable expectation on our part disappointed? Because, not yield to her earnest and repeated solicitations to vote against abolition of the slave trade, or at least to be neuter. I voted in favour of it, and she disposed of her fortune accordingly. The honourable General says, that we are very much at our ease while we are voting away the property of others; that we go home to the enjoyment of our dinners and of our beds, without thinking on the ruin and ruin we are to bring on a great body of our fellow subjects. Sir, of *me* at least, it cannot be said that, while I neglected *their* interests, I was careful of my own. I acted with my eyes open, for I was distinctly threatened with the consequence. And yet I went home that day with appetite to my dinner, and shall do to-day, and slept soundly that night. Had I done otherwise, I should have lost that quiet mind, without which, neither can the luxuries of the table gratify the palate, nor the bed give repose. Forgive me, Sir, for speaking of myself in this manner. The facts I allude to are well known to every one, and every one knows me. My object in referring to them is to obtain credit for my sincerity, in the part I now take, even with those, who undervalue my judgement. The honourable Baronet, in vehement language and passionate terms, complains of the enormous wrong and injury which the West-India proprietors and planters are to suffer by this bill, without any compensation. I deny it as a fact. If it were true, let them begin by entitling themselves to redress, before they expect that the House will listen to their complaint. I answer them with the authority and in the language of common sense and equity, ever since equity was known in England; *Do justice, and you demand it.* NON FERET ÆQUUM, QUI PETIT INIQUUM. As long as you are guilty of an enormous injustice, on the very same ground and subject matter of your pretended wrongs, the court will not listen to you, even tho' it were true that you had some equitable claim to compensation or relief. The honourable Baronet says, that the preamble to the bill, in asserting that *the slave trade is contrary to the principles of justice and humanity*, is a cruel mockery of the feelings of persons in his situation, and that it adds insult to wrong. The honourable General, on the other hand, says, that it is nothing more than the truth, that it was true a hundred years ago, and has continued so to this hour; and therefore, I suppose, he concludes it is too trite and notorious to be worth asserting. The honourable gentlemen agree better in their views, than in their principles. The honourable Baronet says, that the state of the greater part of the West-India proprietors is already sufficiently distressing, and in many

instances deplorable ; that their estates are mortgaged, for the whole of their actual value, to merchants and other monied men in this country ; and that this bill will annihilate the security of the mortgagees. Be it so. The interest then is in *them*, and from *us* we have had no petition. The honourable Baronet's anxiety for the mortgagees is extremely generous I confess ; but, if his estimate of the actual situation of West-India property be correct, the mortgagees would suffer little or nothing, even by a general foreclosure. The gentlemen recommend it to us not to forget policy, while we are talking of justice ; from which I can only collect that, in their opinion, at least, there is an evident distinction between policy and justice. In mine, Sir, they are the same. If there be any circumstances of the present moment, or in the actual situation of affairs in the West-Indies, which may render it prudent or adviseable to carry the measure of abolition into instant execution, His Majesty's Ministers, who have the best information on such points, and who are trusted with the care of the general interests of the empire, will tell us so. I must confide in their prudence. If, by withholding any necessary information of fact, they suffer the House to be misled, they are to answer for it. But as to general and fundamental principles of policy, I want no instruction from any man. I know that it is by justice only that great empires can preserve their greatness. *sic fortis Etruria crevit*, and that, by abandoning that principle, they ensure their ruin. But, when argument fails, we are threatened if we persist. The example of the loss of America is held up to us by way of warning not to provoke the West-Indians lest they also should be lost to Great Britain. If this be a question of policy only, I answer it with a better ;—that the events and the decisions of human councils are at the disposal of a higher wisdom than we, and that those conclusions, which we most strongly dread and deplore in prospect, are very often beneficial in the event. If it be a menace, I answer it with a fact. At the outset of that contest, the terror held out by those who promoted and those who opposed it, was the loss of America ; by the former if we persisted by the latter, if we persisted. But all parties agreed that the loss of America must be the ruin of Great Britain. America was yet, in spite of that loss, and of all that this country was to suffer in attempting to recover it, Great Britain has survived, stood as firm and secure as ever ; nor do I know with certainty that Great Britain is essentially weakened or impoverished by the loss of America. The honourable General states it as an axiom that it is in the Councils of the Administration to waste so many li-

quander such immense sums of money in expeditions to make conquests in the West Indies, while in effect they forbid the cultivation not only of any you may acquire, but even of those, which you possess. Of what use are the acquisitions, if the importation of negroes be forbidden? Sir, it would be improper to enter now upon the policy of these expeditions. That question is not before us, is this the time for it. But to the objection, as it is stated, the answer is obvious. On our principles, there is no contradiction between the policy of the expeditions, and the object of the bill. The two measures may be consistent, at least in the judgement of persons, who think and maintain, as I do, that the cultivation of all the lands in the West Indies may be effectually provided for without a farther importation of negroes from Africa. The honourable Baronet complains of the extreme rigour and severity of the penalties imposed by this bill. My answer is that, if the purposes of the law be good, if the object be just and necessary, the penalties must be sufficient to enforce the execution and insure the effect. Beyond that point, I allow, they ought not to be extended. On this part of the subject I call on the gentlemen of the long robe to give us their advice and assistance. It is properly their business and duty to watch the construction of all penal acts, and to take care that they neither violate the principles, nor extend the spirit of our English jurisprudence without absolute necessity. I own I have my doubts, whether there may not be some foundation for the apprehension expressed by the honourable Baronet, that the extreme latitude of the terms used in the first clause, by which *procuring, aiding, or abetting* in the importation of any negroes, put on the same footing with the actual importation and made subject to the same penalty of transportation for fourteen years, may involve innocent persons in the consequences of acts done without their participation, and even without their knowledge. Here again I call on the gentlemen of the long robe, to examine this matter and give us their advice. The honourable Baronet affirms and laments that, by this clause, men of birth, fortune, and education, polished and improved by manners and by learning are liable to a punishment degrading as well as rigorous, and to be confounded with rascals and criminals of the vilest denomination. I feel the force of the objection; and wish to have it considered. At the same time, I do not think it comes with a very good grace from the honourable Baronet. When the Sedition bill passed, he took no part to oppose it. He saw no objection then to the newly-created penalty of transportation for a seditious libel, on a second offence. By what sort



of persons could that sort of offence be committed? By men of learning, genius, and education. He saw no objection then to the penalty of transportation in company with felons of every description, tho' possibly it might fall on such a man as Mr. Burke or Dr. Parr, or on persons the most eminent in the kingdom for literature and science. Such men, if they were obnoxious to Government, would be prosecuted, in the first instance, on any trifling pretence for the sake of insuring the penalty attached to the second conviction. The honourable Baronet has different rules and measures for offenders, whose quality and character are the same. But justice is to be distributed with an equal hand to all men. The class of offender undoubtedly should be considered, as well as that of the offence. If, in this respect, the bill should be found liable to objection, it ought to be corrected.

Mr. M. MONTAGU spoke in favour of the bill. He considered it as no argument in favour of this trade to say, that it was permitted or encouraged by our ancestors; for, if they were wrong, it was no reason why we should persist in the error. The guilt of a bad system was no justification of its continuance. His friends of the abolition had obtained every communication on the subject. Parliament heard evidence, and examined witnesses, and were convinced of the necessity of the abolition. Gentlemen had talked of their property in this trade; they therefore must have a bias upon the subject; but those who wished for this abolition had no interest one way or other; they acted only from conviction and a sense of their duty. It appeared to him, that upon this question all the eloquence, argument, and justice, was on the side of abolition. He concluded with reminding the House, that they had already decided upon this point; they had voted for its abolition; they were therefore bound in honour, and from a regard to the consistency of their proceedings, to vote for this bill.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that if all the brilliancy of talent, all the force of argument, and all the weight of authority, were united on one side of the question, one should think that those gentlemen who espoused that side, would at least listen to those who have no claims to eloquence, who boast not of the strength of their arguments, and who are entirely devoid of authority, while they state their doubts on a subject on which they have not formed a decided opinion, with that patience, kindness, and forbearance which their humility demands. But if he had only doubted the propriety of the measures proposed to be adopted in former sessions, the business, these doubts had now risen to a decided opinion.

opinion that the bill now before the House would defeat its own object, and obstruct the general interests of the country. His talents might be great or small, and his authority might be weighty or contemptible, but he found himself called upon as a man entrusted with the discharge of a public duty, to come down to the House this evening, not without very considerable personal inconvenience, to oppose a measure, which, if carried into execution, would not only not be productive of good, but which would be the cause of much mischief. He knew he had the misfortune, in entertaining this opinion, to differ from some honourable friends, for whose judgement he had the highest respect, and of the integrity of whose intentions he was well convinced. The principles upon which they acted, increased his esteem for their characters, and the solidity of their judgement inspired him with diffidence of his own opinion. Still, however, after the most deliberate and impartial investigation, which he could bestow on the question, and after weighing the consequences again and again, he was convinced that he was right. He had said before, and he would repeat it now, that though no subject had undergone more ample discussion, though every degree of evidence had been called in, and every species of argument brought forward, in so much, indeed, that it was impossible to advance any thing new, all that had passed in the course of seven years' debate, had only tended to confirm him in the truth of the propositions which he had originally laid down. And these propositions he would re-state, as containing the grounds of all the opinions which he had formed. The first was, that admitting the African slave trade to be founded upon injustice and inhumanity, and admitting that it would be for the interest of the colonies that it should be abolished, this was not the proper time for the abolition. And the second was, that without the cordial co-operation of the West-India merchants it would be absolutely impossible at any time, by any legislative provisions, to effect an abolition of this traffic. He very fully foresaw the sort of reply which would be made to him—It could be said, "What! will you continue to commit injustice, robbery, and murder, because, if you don't, others will do it?" To this he would answer, that to those who considered this question merely with a view to humanity, they must give up the very ground of their argument, if they put it in that way; because it was absurd to talk of a wish to serve the cause of humanity, by throwing the trade into the hands of those who would not carry it on with so much kindness as we do. It would be very fair for gentlemen to say, they wished, by the abolition of this trade, to wipe away the stain

which it had thrown upon this country: but it was absurd to say they wished to serve the cause of humanity by it, because by the mode, which they proposed the very reverse must be the result. It had been stated that America, Denmark, and other powers, were taking steps towards the abolition of this trade: he would state his opinion very fairly upon that point—he did not think it possible for England to abolish the slave traffic, unless other nations would also consent to its abolition. He did not like to speak about the power which this country had over the colonies; it was a subject which required to be handled with great delicacy; but he wished just to throw out a hint for the serious and sober consideration of the House. If this point, of the extent of our power over the colonies, remained a matter of dispute, it might lead to the discussion of another question, which this country had not been accustomed to hear disputed. No man, who was able to form an idea of the relation which subsisted between the mother country and her colonies, could be ignorant of these points—that the colony was entitled to protection that she was bound to send her produce to the mother country; and that she was to take, in return, the exports of the mother country and not go to any other market for them:—These were all points which admitted of no dispute. A question, however, had been started only of late, how far the mother country is entitled to prohibit that supply from being obtained by its colonies, which cannot furnish, and which they have been in use to receive from the continent of Africa. And if there was not something in this subject which precludes all considerations of policy, he conceived a full discussion of this question to be well worth the attention of the House. But waving the question of right, he was decidedly of opinion, that it was out of the power of the British Legislature to suppress the trade, without the co-operation of the West-India planters. To this he knew it would be said---What? is the British navy not able to prevent the decrees of Parliament from being violated? Who is the man who will maintain such an absurd position? I am the man, said Mr. Dundas, who will maintain, and in confirmation of my assertion, I will appeal to the experience of last year, when with twenty-eight ships of war stationed on the coast of two islands in the West-Indies, we were unable to suppress communication between these and other islands. Slaves will be smuggled from other islands, be they Danish or be they Portuguese, or be they what they will, into the British islands, in spite of all the vigilance which can be exercised. He had a heartfelt regret in saying it, but the experience of last year had demonstrated its truth, for let the act be what it would, it was such as offered an inducement

ment to the West-India merchants to combat its execution. The conclusion was one which he would press again and again upon the House, that they ought impartially to consider whether the person would most effectually attain the object of the bill, who proposed an abolition of the trade by slow and gradual means, whether the person best consults the interest of the oppressed and injured African, who is for abolishing the trade by measures gradual, by measures conciliating, and by measures natural, or he who attacks it with the high hand of head-strong authority, forgetful of both the parties interested, and the property at stake? He submitted it to his honourable friend, and those who with him were the supporters of the bill, whether it was not worth while to mix a little conciliation with their provisions; to mix a little concern for the interests of the colonies, with those manly and pious feelings which they professed, and certainly felt for the fate of an oppressed nation. He was afraid that the whole mode of proceeding had tended to engage the West-India planters in one common interest, or rather, perhaps, in one common passion, against their best interests. Aspersions of the foulest kind had, in the course of the business, been thrown out against the West-India planters, as a collective body. They had been represented as a band of savages, and as disgracing, by their characters, the country from which they claimed descent. There was no species of obloquy with which they were not besmeared: there was no tale of reproach which was not hunted out, and solitary insulated instances of cruelty were brought forward as characteristic of all the planters. Accordingly, the first sentiment which offered itself to the minds of the planters, was a desire to vindicate their own characters from the calumnies by which they had been injured. Come, said they, with one voice, let us go to Great Britain and exculpate ourselves from the imputation of those crimes, the disgrace of which will descend to our posterity, and make them ashamed to recognize us as their ancestors. The common injury which their character sustained, united them in one common cause. Mr. Dundas then adverted to a few of the provisions, contained in the bill. The penalties, he confessed, to be rigorous, but he was not much inclined to quarrel with them if the object of the bill was admitted to be proper, because it was certainly competent for the honourable gentleman to chuse those means which were most likely to give his measures effect. If he had been the framer of the bill, however, there was one clause which he certainly would not have admitted, viz. that by which the planters were invested with the power of removing negroes from one island to another. After acquiring an attachment to the soil,



and being in some measure a second time domiciliated, to be separated from a wife, a son, or a relation, and conveyed to a place to which he was a stranger, and to mingle with people who did not know, seemed to him to be one of the cruellest situations which the unhappy African could be placed in. This power, however, might be reserved to the planters as a proper acknowledgment of the attention which their interests demanded from the framers of the bill. There was another clause, however, to which this observation would not apply: when a vessel, laden with negroes, was found at sea, what was to be done? The unhappy wretches on board were represented as being cruelly torn from their native land, and all that they held dear, transported in a situation more than that of criminals, and about to be conveyed into a state of servitude and oppression. He admitted the representation to be true, but what was to be done with them when found, or what compensation was to be granted to them? The Africans were to be sold, and as a recompence for their miseries a moiety was to be given to the informers. Was this consulting the interests of humanity, or even acting upon the principles of the bill? He would not enlarge farther upon the various provisions it contained. He allowed the principle of the bill to be just: he thought that the African slave trade was contrary to justice and humanity, and that it ought to be abolished. But when he descended from moral considerations, there it was that he differed with some of his honest friends; and in this point of view he had no hesitation in saying that it was not within the bounds of possibility in Parliament to give effect to the bill at the present moment. For he repeated again; from the experience of last year, he found it would be absolutely impossible to prevent the smuggling of slaves from one place to another. And upon this ground he submitted to the House whether it was possible to abolish the trade without the co-operation of the planters? He expected to have found something in the face of the bill, which would have shewn that Parliament paid attention to the interests of a respectable body of men, who put their property under the protection of the Legislature. In this he was deceived. It was stated by an honourable Gentleman (Smith) that the trade had existed for a great length of time. In the reply which was made to this was, that its ancient standing only made us the more anxious to get it abolished. Ought we, said Mr. Dundas, in justice to the memory of our ancestors, to have so much eagerness to throw upon them the stigma, of having encouraged a trade of inhumanity and injustice? But independent of all considerations of this sort, the answer itself was not



one, for certainly the long duration of any system whatever, was an argument why it should not be abruptly exploded. It had not, however, been sanctioned by a mere acquiescence on the part of the British Parliament. Foreign merchants had been goaded and stimulated by this country, to embark their capital in the trade. It was unnecessary to refer to all the acts of Parliament which might be quoted to prove this proposition; but what he argued from it was this—not that the trade ought not to be abolished, (for though his honourable friend seemed to think that the bill having passed through a stage or two precluded all objections to it, he would not claim any such advantage from the sanction of our ancestors for a century and a half) but to shew that the Legislature ought not to overlook the interest of any of the parties concerned; that while they acted upon the enlarged principle of granting justice to all mankind, they ought not to neglect the municipal and provincial interests of their own country.

The property vested in the West-India islands had been calculated to amount to between seventy and eighty millions, twenty millions of which was reckoned to be British. This claim of interest, though it had been much inveighed against, the planters had a right to state; and if the Legislature were imposing any hardship upon the planters, their creditors had a right to complain. Four years ago he had proposed a gradual abolition, but when he proposed this, he never lost sight of appointing a commission to inquire into the amount of the injury which the planters would sustain, so that Parliament might provide for their indemnification. The want of such a clause, he stated, as a capital objection to the present bill. If the bill, in its present form, were to go out to the West Indies, and if the planters were to be considerably inflamed by its contents, let gentlemen recollect the sort of provocation that they have had from attacks upon their character, as well as their property. In his opinion it would be wisdom on the part of the House, to pause a little before they came to a decision, to mix some measures of conciliation with their zeal, to mix some parental care for the colonies with their ardour for the general interests of humanity, and to send out a commission along with the bill, to inquire into the amount of the damages which may be sustained by individuals, and the mode in which they may be most easily repaired. He shuddered when he anticipated the effects of an immediate abolition. The trustees of infants would naturally be led to look sharply after the recovery of that property of which they were the appointed guardians; and if that was the case, did they really mean that all mortgages should be for ever foreclosed, without stepping in to prevent it? Courts of

Equity had sometimes thought fit to interfere, in order to prevent foreclosures; and such interference was, in his opinion, not unworthy of the Legislature, when they considered the lame effects which accrue from them in the present instance. A considerable part of the property in the West-India islands rested on credit, and an immediate abolition of the African trade would expose the planters to all the rigour of their creditors. Some planters in the island of Tobago were bound to keep a certain number of negroes upon their estates; and when that island was taken by the French in the last war, some of the estates were seized by a judgment of a French tribunal, because they had not the proper number of negroes. In such instances the abolition of the trade would amount, in effect, to a confiscation of the estates. He hoped that it would not be thought that the last four years in which the planters were left at liberty to import negroes without restriction, was a sufficient reparation for the injuries which they would sustain. For from the particular situation of the islands it had so happened, that those which most needed supplies, were not in a condition to receive them. Jamaica, in which there was abundance of negroes, had remained quiet. But he asked, had St. Vincent's, which had been in a state of devastation; had Grenada, which had been in a similar situation; or had Dominica, which had been in a state of rebellion, reaped the benefit of the suspension? They certainly had not. But this was not all, he had heard it stated as a matter of doubt how far it was sound policy in this country to retain the West-India islands, because we had not suffered from the effects of the war in America; and one gentleman, on a former night, had proposed as an instrument to enforce obedience to our decrees, to menace the islands with independence. The right honourable Secretary animating warmly on the expression, and, to shew the importance of the issue, he called upon the House to attend to the following statement:—The imports from the British West-India islands in 1793, amounted to 8,800,000*l.* the revenue arising from which was 1,624,000*l.* The shipping was 664 vessels, bearing 150,000 tonnage, and employing 8000 seamen. The exports from the islands to the country in 1794, amounted to 3,700,000*l.* carrying 700 vessels, bearing 177,000 tonnage, and 12,000 seamen. And the produce of the West-India islands imported into the country and exported, amounted to 3,700,000*l.* forming a considerable proportion of our foreign export trade. He asked, if these objects were worth the consideration of the Legislature or not? He was not a crime to talk of policy in the House of Commons. He begged to know whether some caution was not necessary before

attempted to try experiments on an object of such importance ? Taking up the subject in another point of view ; and considering America as now independent, were the gentlemen who used such language quite clear, that if we were to abandon our colonies, that she would not take them under her protection, or that no other power would reach out a fatherly hand to offer them protection ? The Americans could scarcely fail to avail themselves of that occurrence, and incorporate or ally themselves with the colonies ; and then, although from the extent of capital, and the establishment of manufacture, the effect would not be immediate, our trade and commerce would rapidly decline, and revive in other countries. This was an event to which such a separation infallibly tended, and which required no great skill in prophecy to predict. It was, therefore, preposterous for a grave assembly of Legislators, or any set of men, past the rash and giddy period of youth, to treat that possible contingency with indifference. He could not, for these reasons, avoid warning the House against passing the bill, without taking some steps to convince the planters that their interest should not be injured. Giving the planters only a little longer time, he contended, would be no good to them, and much injury to the country. It might benefit, indeed, a few African ship captains and slave-jobbers ; but by encouraging a great and rapid importation of aged negroes into the colonies, it would endanger their peace and security. There was only one way in which, in his opinion, the abolition could be safely effected ; instead of limiting the number of slaves imported, to confine the description to those under a certain age. For this purpose, in his opinion, none ought to be imported above the age of twenty. The practicability and expediency of this measure he vindicated from a proposition made by the Assembly of Jamaica to the Government of Great Britain, that it would allow them to lay a tax of seven pounds upon the importation of every negro above the age of thirty. This proposition was not acceded to by the Government ; but it shewed the opinion of the Assembly, both on the practicability and propriety of the scheme. And if it was practicable to distinguish such as were under thirty, it would be much easier to distinguish those who were under twenty. Formerly there was a great disproportion in the sexes of the slaves, because the planters had no other idea of keeping up the population except by importation ; and, therefore, the population was certainly not now in a complete state, or in one that promised an internal supply sufficient for the purposes of the plantations. These were the grounds upon which he should oppose this bill, which he did most earnestly and emphatically. He wished his honourable

friend would consider these things. He applauded his godlike enterprise in endeavouring so long to abolish the trade, and believed he was actuated by the best of motives; but he hoped his honourable friend would weigh these circumstances before he proceeded any farther. The world must decide upon the conduct of those who took different sides upon this question. The principles of a man were not shewn by having fine speeches in his mouth about humanity and justice, they were shewn by his conduct. He had as much feeling as those who were always talking about it, and he should treat an insinuation to the contrary with the contempt it deserved. He was sorry to have taken up so much of the time of the House. If he had spoken with warmth, it was from the earnestness he felt upon this subject; he meant to treat every body with respect. He gave his opponents full credit for the goodness of their intentions, and trusted they would use the same candour to him. He concluded with giving his negative to the bill, and intreated the House seriously to consider the consequences which would follow from their decision.

Mr. FOX. As the right honourable gentleman seemed in the first part of his speech particularly to allude to me, I am desirous to take this opportunity shortly to give my opinion on the subject of the debate, which at all events I should have felt to be necessary at the close of the evening. I am glad that the right honourable gentleman has found himself sufficiently recovered to attend on this occasion, and more especially that he has been able to enter into a full discussion of the question. When we consider his abilities, his opportunities of acquiring information on the subject, and the great attention which he has paid to it, we may flatter ourselves that we have now heard the whole force of the argument against the trade. When I say against us, I am aware that I do not use the most parliamentary way of speaking; but I must confess, that I have been so long engaged in one side of the question, that I have not formed a strong predetermined opinion. I do not affirm that I am not to be shaken by reasoning, but so intimately interwoven is my conviction, that I cannot easily be persuaded, that any reasoning could be found to induce me to alter it. There were many parts of the speech of the right honourable gentleman, which must be considered as highly favourable to the cause of those who are friends to the abolition. The whole of his argument is a complete answer to those advocates on the other side, who contend, that the question ought to be left at rest, that the discussion is highly improper, under the peculiar circumstances of the present time, and that it ought not at all to be agitated. I am happy to find that the right honourable



gentleman and myself agree in our premises, however we may differ with respect to our conclusion. He admits that the trade is not only inconsistent with humanity and justice (and I should suppose, when I had got that I had not much to ask), but with policy and prudence in time of war. It appears then that we only differ as to the mode of abolition. The right honourable gentleman states a powerful objection to our mode, if it be well founded; namely, that it is impracticable. Let us examine it, as contrasted with that mode of abolition which he has himself proposed, and see to which this objection of impracticability may most justly be applied. First, he states that our mode cannot be carried into effect without the consent of the planters, which we cannot expect to have. I have no hesitation to state, that if to the accomplishment of the abolition of the slave trade, we attach, as a necessary condition, the consent of the planters, we do not see the question in a fair and manly light, if we do not look to the continuance of that traffic. What ground of hope have we, even from their professions, that they will ever be induced to give their consent to such a measure? And if we advert to what has been their conduct in every former instance, we cannot have the smallest prospect that such an event is ever likely to take place. On a former occasion, I trust I may make the allusion without any irregularity, [Mr. Fox here alluded to the line of argument adopted by Mr. Dundas, when he proposed his plan of gradual abolition], I remember great pains to have been taken to talk two different languages to the different parties in this question, to persuade the planters that if they did not accede to terms of gradual abolition, an immediate abolition would be effected; and the enemies of the trade, that if they did not accept of their object upon the same terms, there would be no abolition at all. This attempt to persuade both parties completely failed. It did not succeed with me, because I was persuaded that the abolition might be effected in a different manner; and I have not understood that it has gained one proselyte among the West Indians. The right honourable gentleman says, whatever laws may be passed, the traffic in slaves will not be extirpated, and that the whole of the navy of England cannot prevent illicit intercourse. I am fully aware of the truth of this position, and of the inefficacy of laws to suppress any commerce which holds out the tempting prospect of high profit; but this refutes the reasoning of those who condemned the severity of penalties imposed by the present bill, as it is evident that the rigour of the penalty ought to be in proportion to the difficulty of suppressing the offence. In this respect, therefore, the right honourable gentleman made the fullest

defence of those penalties, which have been so much reprobated. On the penalties themselves he did not dwell much, in fact, he did not seem to take them at all into his consideration. When he asked, "Will it not be practicable to smuggle, notwithstanding the operation of the law?" Ought not another question to have suggested itself, "Is it not also possible, that those concerned in smuggling may be detected?" May it not be expected, that the law will at least have some effect in securing the object in view; that in some instances the vigilance of its operation will arrest the criminal; that in others, the contemplation of its penalties will prevent offence? But another objection is, that these laws cannot be executed without the co-operation of the West-Indians themselves. Are there not already laws in force, prohibiting any intercourse between the West Indies and North America, for the purpose of procuring provisions? Has there been found any deficiency with respect to the observance of those laws, and yet provisions may be purchased more easily than slaves? Allusions have been made to an expression brought forward by me on a former evening, and repeated this night by an honourable friend of mine, (Mr. Francis Boscawen.) From the construction put upon that expression, I conceive there has been misunderstanding.

My honourable friend did not say "the West Indies are of little consequence, let them go." He merely answered a speculation that the consequence of the abolition of the slave trade would be the loss of our West-India possessions, a speculation which by the bye is very uncertain. To the assertion on the one side, he only opposed an assertion of his own, that even if the speculation of the loss of those islands should be true, we should be as well without them, and then came in the case of America. On that subject, I confess that I hold a different opinion; I consider the loss of America as a grievous misfortune to the British empire. I always should be inclined to coincide with those prudent men, who are not disposed to risque any great stake on the chance of speculation; and if I were in the contest between Great Britain and her colonies, I had been of the opinion of the Dean of Gloucester, that the independence of America was desirable, I should not have ventured to have acted on that opinion. But in this case, if the West-India planters should present the alternative "Either we will separate from Great Britain, or continue the slave trade," I should have no hesitation. I would say, "Separate, go to America, or if you think proper go to France." When I threaten them thus, I mean to contend that the separation would be infinitely more inconvenient to them than to Great Britain, and that they are but little prepared for such

step. The right honourable gentleman entered into a detail of the amount of the importations, but was afterwards obliged to admit, that not much stress was to be laid on a calculation of that sort. He entered also into a speculation with respect to the rivalry of America in point of manufactures. The probability of what this country may suffer from such a rivalry, I consider to be very remote. The extent of land to be cultivated in America, compared even with the increasing rate of population, must retard such an event for a great number of years. But when I venture to put the case of the loss of the West Indies, I talk so from a certainty that there is no danger of such a separation, and from a firm conviction that it cannot be the result of the present bill. As to the point of right, I affirm that, from the nature of the connection, no right can be more unquestionable than for the Legislature of Great Britain to interfere in regulating the external commerce of her colonies. The right honourable gentleman says, that if you cut them off from one branch of trade, you become yourselves bound to supply the deficiency. In point of fact the argument is not founded, for you have already interdicted them from many branches of commerce, which you do not supply. But what is the extent of his argument, as applied to the present case? To say that you are bound to supply the West-India planters with slaves with your own hands, and your own capital, till such a time as those gentlemen are convinced that no fresh supplies are necessary, is to suppose that you have formed something like the worst of all contracts. It is to suppose that you have sold yourselves to the Devil to the end of time, and are engaged to do his service, without the possibility of redemption. When the right honourable gentleman talks of the danger to be apprehended from slaves newly imported from a country, where neither from morality or philosophy they have acquired any laudable sentiment or good disposition, where neither precept nor example has concurred to form them to amiable manners and habits of virtue, what is the obvious inference? If there is one country in the world so peculiarly unfortunate, so totally depraved, is not this wretched picture of our nature owing to the existence of that abominable traffic, which thus tends to eradicate from the character any thing good, amiable, or even human? Can there exist any obligation to be the conductors of such a trade? We cannot have made such a contract. If we have, it is one of those few contracts, which ought to be violated. The right honourable gentleman, in taking notice of the particular clauses of the bill, lamented that there should be one, enacting, that those slaves, who are already in the islands, should be taken from one island to another, and thus separated from their acquaint-

ance, and the connections they may have formed. If such feelings with respect to a removal from Barbadoes to Jamaica he conceives the attachment which binds them to the place the once inhabited to be so strong, with what sentiments must I contemplate that separation which they, in the first instance, expel from their native soil—that separation which breaks asunder the bands of nature, which tears them from every object of æsthetic fondness, from every scene of early endearment? With respect to the other clause, which enacts, that those negroes who be attempted to be brought over for the purpose of illegal commerce be sold, and the money applied to particular purposes; I cannot but regret its operation, and I sincerely wish that any other mode of disposing of them could possibly be suggested. It is urged by us, “You say, that they are unjustly torn from their friends in their country:—Why then do you not take the means to return them?” If it were possible to secure this object, I should not incur any expence with which it might be attended. But one of the evils of this robbery is, that it leaves no means of restitution. If we attempt again to convey those wretches to the coast of Africa, they might only be left to perish by famine, or might be exposed to the repetition of the same sufferings which we now deprecate; and this circumstance in itself I can only consider as a fresh stigma which attaches to this abominable traffic, and a more convincing proof of its foul atrocity. As to the practicability of the different plans, so far as they are connected with the question of the co-operation of the colonies; if the plan of abolition can be carried into effect with the consent and co-operation of the colonies, my plan is fully as practicable as that of the right honourable gentleman: but if it must be enforced without their consent, his plan is more difficult in execution, and less certain in its operation than mine. Every thing becomes easy, in proportion as distinction is difficult. Would it be harder to punish a man for importing negroes, or for only importing them above a certain age? In the one case the enactment is simple and positive, and removes at once all difficulty and deception; in the other, the distinction is matter of intricacy and doubt, and opens a wide door for imposition and subterfuge. But is the right honourable gentleman prepared to say, that he is authorized by the India planters to state their co-operation to the plan which I have proposed? Have they not constantly opposed the utmost object in their power to every step which has been taken in this business? Did not the act to prevent the exportation of negroes to other colonies meet also the opposition of those gentlemen who are enemies to abolition? Their co-operation we cannot hope, and we never



it. Doubts have been attempted to be raised with whom the rested to decide upon this question. Unquestionably the Assembly of Jamaica may decide upon matters of internal jurisdiction, but it belongs to the Parliament of Great Britain to regulate the commerce of external trade. It was not fit that the Assembly of Jamaica should take upon itself the province of the British Legislature. Yet this was the scope of that reasoning, which went to affirm that this trade could not be abolished without the consent of the colonies. In respect to the existence of a supposed engagement sanctioning the trade, and pledging the faith of Parliament for its continuance; never Parliament at any time thinks proper to encourage a trade on a point of policy, it by no means binds itself either to carry it on, or to compensate for its abolition. When I opposed the commercial treaty with France, on the ground that it would be prejudicial to the trade with Portugal, I never pushed the argument so far as to contend, that because, by a former treaty, we had encouraged the trade with Portugal, we were still indispensably bound to afford it the same countenance, and not to divert commerce into any other channel. But what have we done this session and the last? We have in this country, on the ground of the scarcity of provisions, merely stopped a great trade, the distillery trade. No proposition could be more evident, than whenever any motive of policy requires a trade to be suppressed, the Legislature are immediately authorized to employ measures to suppress it. But the suppression of this trade was called for, not only by motives of policy, but of humanity; and what is far superior to any considerations either of policy or humanity—by the principles of justice. The right honourable gentleman admits, that without some regulations the trade not only cannot be carried on, consistently with policy and prudence, but consistently with humanity and justice. When he admits this right of regulation, all questions with respect to the right of interference is at an end. If we have a right to stop the importation of all slaves above a certain quantity, why not stop the importation of all? If the right honourable gentleman had brought forward what he stated, respecting a petition, to take into consideration the situation of the West-Indies, and the claims of the planters, as a specific proposition, I could certainly, in that form, have given it all due attention. At the most, it can only weigh as an argument for him, to bring up a clause for that purpose, to be inserted in the bill. In the course of his speech he took notice of the unfounded calumnies circulated against the planters, who had been represented as men void of humanity. Undoubtedly a great body of evidence was brought forward to prove, that many acts of cruelty and tyranny had at dif-

ferent times been perpetrated, under the sanction of this traffic. This, indeed, is no good reason why the planters, partake of the characters of any mixed body of men, should be branded with one general stigma. It cannot, however, be denied that wherever there is slavery, there will be abuse. If, with respect to the West Indies, we judge of the national character from the laws which has always been considered as its best criterion, the laws, we shall form no very favourable conclusion. What laws are more detestable than the laws of Barbadoes? which have been referred to on a former occasion: and if any thing can exceed the letter of the law of Barbadoes, it is the practice of Jamaica, ascribed by Bryan Edwards, a man who is justly entitled to praise. I do not impute that spirit of cruelty to individuals, but to the infallible consequence of slavery. This trade, it is said, has existed a hundred years. Slavery, it is to be lamented, is older. We have had writers on slavery among the ancients, and there we can trace the same effects produced by this detestable practice, as we have occasion to witness in modern times. The authority of Aristotle has been quoted, and what does he say on this subject? "The Barbarians are slaves by nature, and made for the service of the Greeks." Finding the practice subsisting among his countrymen, this occurred to him as the easiest and most satisfactory mode of accounting for its origin; and in another place he says, "You must not introduce what is too improbable, even in fiction; therefore you must not represent a slave as a good man; for this character, though not impossible, is contrary to nature and to common experience." Nothing, indeed, can be more true than that the virtues of man are allied to liberty: in the generous soil of freedom they take deep root, and acquire their full vigour and maturity; but vices foster on the dunghill of slavery, and shoot forth with natural luxuriance. But the right honourable gentleman says, that if we should abandon the trade, from a principle of justice, we should still gain nothing on the score of humanity. I will not repeat that argument already so often enforced, that we ought to abstain from crimes without any consideration of consequence. But I will ask, if we abandon the trade at the present moment, who are likely to take it up? Will the French, the Dutch, the Americans readily embark in such an undertaking? If, from a principle of justice, this great country take the lead in renouncing that abominable and disgraceful traffic; if America bear testimony to the same cause, and France, already pledged by her own declarations, persevere in the course she has adopted, may not this powerful example be supposed to be the most effectual step to bring

complete and final abolition? I ask those who question your right to legislate for Jamaica, what right you have to legislate for Africa? What right Englishmen have to tear the unoffending inhabitants from their native soil, and to devote them as the victims of their avarice and cruelty? what sort of law is that which sanctions the commission of injustice, or what sort of morality is that which teaches us to commit crimes, because they are countenanced by the example of others?

An honourable friend of mine (General Smith) supposed, that a general burst of exclamation, which proceeded from those who were adverse to the trade, was meant to interrupt him, and said, "it was very well for gentlemen to decide on the question, without thinking of the claims of those in the West Indies, and then to retire to their luxury or repose." I rather suppose that exclamation proceeded from those who were thinking of the claims of persons in the West Indies, though not of the description intended by the honourable General, from those who were thinking of the claims of the poor negroes. Good God, are we placed in those circumstances of comfort and ease which he described, and can we hesitate a moment to decide whether we shall leave the African in possession of the common blessings of nature; of the enjoyment of his freedom, and the privilege of his industry, or whether we shall barbarously tear him from his home, and doom him to be the drudge of avarice, and the victim of tyranny? But if I have already shewn the plan of the right honourable gentleman to be more exceptionable in point of practicability; how does it stand in point of humanity and justice? What must we think if Great Britain, giving up the general point of its right to carry on the trade, and openly avowing its injustice, should still continue to exercise that trade with respect to the weak and the helpless? Is it of consequence for a nation to be moral? What impression then must it give to other states, that Great Britain declares that she feels the inhumanity, that she acknowledges the injustice of the slave trade, that she henceforth renounces all privilege to traffic in those who have arrived to manhood, and attained their full strength, but reserves to herself the power to prey on helpless infancy and unoffending innocence, without considering the feelings of those who are thus bereaved of their children, or the sufferings of the poor victims thus dragged from the bosom of parental fondness, to drink the bitter draught of slavery? Can a Government continue respected or respectable, which places humanity and justice on one hand, and policy and gain on the other? This must be the case if you do not abolish the slave trade, and more so if you adopt the plan of abolition proposed by the right honourable

gentleman. My friend (General Smith) says, that an act of parliament will never pass to abolish this trade. I am persuaded the opinion of the House of Commons, firmly and decidedly pressed, will have great weight in influencing the ultimate decision and you ought to lose no time in giving it the utmost possible effect. I am astonished that our proposition should be termed abrupt and hasty; it is now eight years since first the business was brought forward; the abolition, by a vote of this House, was fixed for 1797 and we now come to ask it in 1797. Of all other charges, the haste and precipitance is the least applicable to the supporters of the bill. If the other part of the Legislature shall still be found to differ from us in opinion on this subject, let us at least shew, by our conduct, that it is not the fault of the House of Commons to obstruct the continuance of a trade, which every man admits to be contrary to humanity, policy, and justice.

Mr. ROSE said, that the provisions of this bill were such that the House could not pass with any attention to the interest of the subjects, or even with probable success in the object proposed. He believed that the consent of the West-India proprietors might be obtained, though their concurrence could not be expected to be so violent as the present. He thought many of the clauses liable to particular objection. It was provided that the subjects of foreign states should be liable to punishment who disobeyed this bill, but he would be glad to know how this could be done? The subjects of this country carrying slaves to foreign islands were liable to certain penalties. Yet natives of Ireland were subjects of this country and if they were not included, the trade might be transferred to Ireland, and Cork and Waterford rise on the ruins of Liverpool and Bristol. Persons transgressing the law were to be brought home, and tried in this country, and had the privilege of bringing home whomever they chose to be witnesses on their trial, and might be competent to the Governor of an island to send home the whole council to give evidence for the prosecution. Upon the principle of the bill he thought that a violent interference like the present would be attended with the utmost danger.

Serjeant ADAIR said, that he saw the force of the objections of the honourable gentleman in their utmost extent, and if it were possible, he should wish that the object of the bill could be effected at the same time leaving out the exceptionable provisions. But many were some of them founded on misapprehension. Foreigners were not subject to the provisions of this bill, but in the single case where they landed and sold negroes in our islands, and their punishment in such cases was recognised by the custom of every country, and



the principles of the law of nations. In other cases the punishment and the penalties were confined exclusively to subjects of this country. That inconvenience might arise from the bringing of witnesses home from the colonies was true, but not to the extravagance of the suppositions and of the examples which the honourable gentleman chose to adduce. It certainly could be no hardship to bring the offenders home, where they would be tried by a jury of their countrymen much better and much fairer, than any where else. Besides, most of the offences might not be committed in the West-Indies, but on the high seas, or on the coast of Africa.—After all, if any thing could be devised to answer the purpose of the bill, without the necessity of bringing the persons home, he would be very happy, but in the present state of the West-Indies, it was not to be expected that justice would be done upon any culprits by whom the law might be violated. As to the mode of disposing of the slaves taken, contrary to the provisions of the bill, at least it was not for those who opposed the measure, to make objections to it. After every day in their lives, exhibiting a conduct contrary to nature and justice, in treating human beings as a commodity, they surely could not find fault with their being sold for the benefit of the captors. This indeed was contrary to the principle of the bill. But it was well observed by his right honourable friend opposite (Mr. Fox), the injustice, after it was once committed with respect to the unhappy negroes, admitted of no remedy. It was necessary that some advantage should be given to the captors of vessels engaged in the traffic, contrary to the provisions of the bill, and if any other mode than that proposed could be devised, it should meet with his support. With regard to the principle of the bill, he should only say a few words. The argument of the right honourable gentleman, Mr. Dundas, with all the abilities of which he was master, so long as he admitted the injustice and inhumanity of the trade, stated no objection that would not be equally applicable fifty years hence as at present. The plan for taking only persons under twenty surely in point of principle was equally unjust, as where a more extensive description of persons were subjected to degradation. He would leave it to the judgement and feeling of the House to decide whether it were more honourable to take women and children than adults, who were able to defend themselves? Besides, the distinction of age was impossible to be preserved where it was so difficult to be ascertained. It was not easy to decide with accuracy the age of persons who had no records to appeal to, and such a regulation would necessarily give rise to so much abuse. The age of the person too could create no difference, with respect

to the atrocity of the injustice by which he suffered, and in instance only in our law was criminality dependant upon the age of the person who was the object of the offence. Upon the whole he would repeat what he had already said, that he was not at liberty to vote but one way, and that was for the abolition. On no pretext could we claim a privilege to legislate for the Africans, unless could we, by an act of Parliament, claim the right of subjecting them to the most cruel slavery; and though the policy of the manner of effecting the abolition was a fit object of consideration, it was of a nature that could not be allowed to weigh against the pressing demands of justice and humanity.

The SECRETARY AT WAR said, that he rose to express the doubts which his mind had felt upon this important subject, and, though he might entertain doubts, the sentiments by which he had originally been influenced were not altered. Even the events which had taken place in Europe, which were sufficient to have reversed all former political opinions, and like an electric shock to have destroyed the magnetism and polarity of the mind, had not overturned the principles on which his opinions on this subject were founded. All havoc of the rights of man had not blunted him to the rights of Africans, nor had the example of French liberty conciled him to African slavery: yet recent events might be sufficient to make him hesitate as to the manner in which the object was to be accomplished. He confessed that he did not think that the subject had been argued satisfactorily on either side, or on such a scale as to remove the doubts under which he laboured. On the point of justice, both parties seemed to be agreed, though there were arguments upon this head that he could not admit. Those who supported the abolition upon the general principles of justice were not consistent with themselves, if they admitted any thing short of the total abolition of the institution of slavery. This should be a caution how they embraced principles without qualification, divested any point of the comprehensive relations that might be involved in it. He did not think it was a proper view of the case to say that we could not legislate for Africa. It was to be considered in what respect our conduct to them was unjust. It violated as much as no municipal law, and slaves were procured sometimes by contract from the African States, so that we ought to be influenced only by a general regard for the happiness of mankind. It was for the welfare of other States then that we were so much interested, and by which our conduct was to be guided. He recalled this to the recollection of the House, to shew the inconsistency of those persons, who, in discussions of present time, equally important as this, maintained

we had no business with general views of the interest of mankind, that this was mere quixotism, and chimerical reveries, and that a nation had nothing to do but to consult its own interest. It was likewise held out as a principle, that we ought not to do wrong merely because others might do it, whether we did so or not. That was true was unquestionable; but the point was this, whether there would be a greater quantity of misery occasioned to mankind by our adding to the number of crimes, or whether the mass of it remained the same, whether we continued to do wrong or not? I thought the example we might give to others, and the effect it might have upon the conduct of others, was the great point of view in which the matter was to be taken. In the present case the example of Great Britain, renowned and glorious as she was, in maintaining from the trade, where the number of individual states engaged in the trade was so small, would be of the greatest importance. It was unfair to argue that Parliament was only doing what it had before resolved upon, and that precipitation was an unjust imputation on a case that had so long depended. But is the state of the islands so changed? Is not the state of Europe changed? This might have been sufficient to have altered, at least suspended, our decision. He was not one of those who weighed gold against blood, and the profits of Europeans against the miseries of Africa. Still he weighed humanity against humanity, and compared the means proposed with the probable attainment of the object. If insurrections were to take place in the islands, he should think that was a very happy circumstance to push the matter at the present moment. The planters might eventually be brought to co-operate in a plan of abolition, to which the favourable state of the world, and the progress of human opinion, would contribute. A time of peace, too, was preferable to a time of war. Bad effects might be produced on the temper of the negroes; and upon the whole he should have been pleased that the subject had not been agitated at the present moment; that it had been allowed to stand off, though laid out of view. He said that a plan had been formed for the abolition of the slave trade by a person (Mr. Burke) of the most extensive benevolence, as well as comprehensive genius, which he had conceived many years before, and intended to bring forward, but he not given way to the honourable gentleman by whom it was agitated, and to whom he had resigned it, careless by whom it was done, provided it was done, and from a conviction that it would then come forward with better hopes of success. The plan of the right honourable gentleman he had viewed with that predilection which he had entertained for every thing which his great



wisdom attempted. The design of that plan was not like the the honourable gentleman's, to begin by abolishing the traffic by introducing such regulations into the treatment of the negro would secure their propagation, and make the trade gradually away. Next to such a plan as this, at the present moment would have wished no plan at all had been adopted. He could think, upon so important a question, of giving no vote at all, seeing the doubts as they appeared to his mind, it was with reluctance that he should vote for the bill. As, however, it was unpleasant to act against principles, to the truth of which he had assented; as he was certain of the principles, and could be certain of the proper force of the objections, he would follow the tenor of conduct which he had uniformly observed on the present subject.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he did not then intend to detain the House with any considerable length of argument. He would merely advert to observations which had been made by his honourable friends who differed from him respecting the time and mode of abolition. As often as he had heard the question agitated as ably as he had always heard it argued, there appeared no reason to change his fixed and decided idea respecting the advantage of speedy and immediate abolition. He was so far from agreeing with his right honourable friend who spoke last, that the great crisis which took place—that the alarming and dangerous events which happened since the introduction of the question into that House, and his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce), were of such a nature as to make gentlemen alter their views with respect to the time and manner of abolition, that he was convinced such circumstances formed the strongest motives to induce the House to adopt the measure. He was free to say, that the danger of principles assented to afloat made him draw a direct conclusion—that with regard to the safety of the islands, with a view to the cause of human justice, we should resort to a quick and immediate abolition. Every consideration which he was able to give the business, this was his invariable opinion. He was at the same time free to say that he felt a very strong anxiety with respect to any evil tenor of the agitation of the business was likely to have on the minds of the negroes, and the interests of the planters, if the bill was not passed. If he thought the measure was not likely to succeed, he had thought that it slept for the present in a temporary oblivion, till it might be brought forward with more safety and unanimity. But he trusted that the bringing it so often forward was likely to advance the measure of abolition in the end, by preparing all parties for



When he heard it from the best authority in the House, that since the subject had been brought forward, the horrors so deprecated and lamented by all, had, in a great measure, ceased, he hoped the practical good of discussion would ultimately counterbalance the political evil apprehended from agitation. From the debates of the House getting abroad he saw no possible danger, but much to be feared from any delay in abolishing a trade so universally admitted to be repugnant to policy, humanity, and justice. He was astonished to hear such contradictory positions from gentlemen affecting the continuance of the trade. Would they, who apprehended such danger from the slaves already imported, continue to import a new mass year after year, and in the same breath contend, that such annual reinforcements cured the mischief that operated on the minds of the old slaves? When he discussed this question of delay, he wished all abstract questions relative to the effect of general emancipation to be left out, particularly at this time; and being stated the danger which a continuance of the trade had produced in the West-Indies, he must contend that every new importation increases that danger; and when it was now so great, and the question become so delicate that the people were almost afraid to agitate it at all, why should they be for a continuation of the cause of that danger, and wish to increase it still more? He differed entirely from his right honourable friend who spoke last, and preferred the mode of abolishing the slave trade by internal and gradual regulations, instead of abolishing it at once: he was decidedly for the latter, as most effectual, and because he knew that the other mode would not in any point of view be more likely to please or satisfy the negroes, planters, proprietors, or any others concerned. By delaying the moment of abolition, all the evils which gentlemen apprehended were encouraged; and future obstacles thrown in the way of the measure: for if such arguments had force now, how much stronger would they be when the mischief with the numbers might be augmented. He could not pass unnoticed the unfairness which had been used by gentlemen in confounding the internal affairs of the islands with the circumstances of the trade. All the miseries and misfortunes of the colonies were not certainly owing to the discontent of the slaves, and this he thought was the idea which would most endanger the interests of the planters. Another point had been much argued, which was, that by delaying the abolition, the West-Indians would themselves become sensible that it was for their interest and credit that it should be eventually put an end to; but how, or upon what principle was this hope to be indulged? or was it to be reconciled to their public acts? He would refer

the House to the report of the Assembly in Jamaica, in 1791 wherein they stated their opinion on the propriety of the abolition and pointed out the period at which they thought it ought to take place, which was, when the numbers of the sexes were so equalized as to ensure a probability of keeping up the population. Here he admitted the expediency, the policy, the humanity, and the justice of the abolition, and only gave their opinion as to the period when it should commence. But compare this report with a petition presented this session, and now on the table, and then see what is to be hoped from any farther delay. In this petition they deny that there is any impolicy, injustice, or inhumanity, in the trade of the West-Indians, that it ought not to be abolished; and this after an unanimous opinion had been given on that point eight years ago. The West-Indians, so far from wishing for abolition, after this petition with which they had been indulged, contradict themselves, and declare themselves completely different in opinion since that time. And it ought to be remembered, that from documents before the House, they were arrived at the very time stated when it was proper for the abolition to take place, namely, when the numbers of the sexes were so equalized as to keep up the population in that island, though perhaps not quite sufficient for the average of all the islands. In this way, and from this mode of proceeding, it was not possible to suppose or guess at a period which the West-Indians would consider was proper for the abolition: this was avowedly the opinion of the petitioners, and it was farther corroborated by this circumstance, since the idea of an immediate abolition being suspended, the importation had increased with fresh vigour, and was one third more, at least, than Parliament had determined it ought to be. Though the importation of negroes for the purpose of founding colonies, was scouted by all, yet he considered that sort of importation precisely the same which was made, not for keeping up the population, but for the improvement of uncultivated lands. If they were to look back for 150 years, and put this question, 'do you make new sugar islands, which cannot be done without encouraging the slave trade?' Is there any man in the present age that would wish to enter upon such a speculation at such a price? As to what had been said of the claims of those who held trade in uncultivated lands for quit rents, there might be many cases in which such claims were well founded; but who could make a speculation for such claims as quit rents on a million of uncultivated acres, to be improved by the importation of negroes? Upon the whole of this part, therefore, he must say, that Parliament ought not to give up to the West-Indians what it became them to do.

that they could do, to abolish so horrid a trade. He maintained undoubted power and right of Parliament to prohibit the trade, its authority, under the act of 1778, which, though it limited right of taxation, except for purposes of revenue, left full power to prohibit trade; and while they can abolish that on which the trade depends, the guilt must remain with them while they leave it to continue. He then referred to a former Report, which stated that the African slave trade was carried on by British subjects, sent inhabitants in Britain and her colonies, in British ships, by British capitals, which gave an undoubted right and control to Parliament over that trade. But it was urged, that if the trade was abolished, it would rise in some other shape. Here he replied, allowing this objection all its force, whether a petty and sordid trade could bear any proportion to that openly carried on under the sanction of the British Government? It was plain that such illicit trade one-tenth of the usual number could not be supported; and thus the practical good of the measure was established, nine-tenths of the negroes ceased to be imported. Yet this was not all—by diminishing the quantum of slaves, the demand for them would be reduced—the misery of the islands would be mitigated, and the horrid circumstances of the African native would be improved. Nor would the blessings of abolition stop here; the example of our colonial possessions would have a happy effect on Europe, and pave the way for universal abolition. This latter was, in his mind, the greatest argument for speedy abolition—it would give others time and opportunity to follow our example. He then heard, in the course of the debate, a doubt expressed of the trade going to Ireland if discontinued here. To this he would say, that he had rather the trade was sanctioned by any other than the people of this country, under the immediate control of our Parliament. If the traffic was exercised by our people, the guilt was ours. If Ireland was to continue it, the guilt would lie with them, not with us. But besides, as we allowed them to participate in our colonial trade, we had a right to make the abolition of the slave trade a stipulation with them. But on this he could not dwell without being guilty of an unwilling and unmerited injustice to that country: he meant not to reflect upon them, and was sure, on the contrary, that Ireland would be the first to follow so laudable an example. He understood in that country there was a great wish for abolition. They would not, he thought, be inclined to transfer to themselves the reproach and shame of the business. There remained nothing for him to say, but to make some observations on the clauses which his honourable friend (Mr. Rose) had

objected to. The first clause was that of making persons take the high seas, in the exercise of this trade, guilty of felony, it had been encouraged for an hundred years past. But if the timely notice of the prohibition, and yet acted in open violation of the law, they were liable to the penalty; and surely, when the nature of the offence was considered, the punishment was necessary. The only difference was, that what before was encouraged was now notified as a crime; and if they wilfully transgressed the law in acts of flagrant injustice, in prolonging the evil of the human commerce over a whole continent which it desolated, ought to be treated as culprits and felons. Surely nobody, who made a proper balance between crimes and punishments, could imagine that felony was a punishment too severe for it, when the offending party acted in defiance to the authority of the Legislature, the dictates of humanity, and the principles of general justice. He could not pass unnoticed the observations which he heard from gentlemen respecting the sale of contraband cargoes of slaves; he could not be sent to Africa, and if it was unsafe to land them in the West-Indies, what could be done with them? If there were any remedy applied, if the selling of them could be avoided, he wished any regulation might be adopted for that purpose. He hoped some provision could be made to prevent this injustice, it would be so invidious; he trusted they could be disposed of in a way more to their own advantage; for it was one of the evils attending the commerce, that they never could return to their native country. He thought a recompense in money might be made to the officer, equivalent to the seizure in money; and perhaps the slaves might be placed in some of our factories, as a place of refuge and asylum, or some part of His Majesty's dominions, where they might be trained in habits of industry and virtue. In all events, he hoped the clause would not operate as a bar to the whole object of the bill—it was a maxim, that something valuable was always to be sacrificed for the sake of a greater good. This was the only ground on which the hardship of the clause could be justified; but from the hints he had thrown out, he hoped they could provide against so great a grievance. He concluded by voting for the total and immediate abolition of the trade.

General TARLETON, in a short speech, went over the substance of the petitions and papers he had presented against the trade, and perceiving the House anxious for the question, he proposed by way of amendment, that instead of the word "now," he inserted the words "this day four months."



Mr. DENT seconded the amendment, and the House divided :  
the amendment, 74 ; against it, 70—majority 4.

of the division in the honourable House of Commons, on the ques-  
tion for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Tuesday, March 15th 1796.

Mr. Charles  
Mr. James  
Mr. J. W.  
Mr. F.  
Mr. William  
Mr. Henry  
Mr. John  
Mr. J. P.  
Mr. Viscount  
Mr. J.  
Mr. J. R.  
Mr. R.  
Mr. R. J.  
Mr. J. jun.  
Mr. George  
Mr. Earl of  
Mr. John  
Mr. Sir W.  
Mr. Charles  
Mr. Hon. E. J.  
Mr. Hon. J.  
Mr. Hon. R.  
Mr. Sir H.  
Mr. Hon. Charles James  
Mr. Philip  
Mr. Charles  
Mr. N. B.  
Mr. James  
Mr. John  
Mr. Henry  
Mr. William  
Mr. R. P.  
Mr. General  
Mr. James  
Mr. R.  
Mr. William  
Mr. R. S.  
Mr. M.  
Mr. Sir J.  
Mr. Lord  
Mr. Dudley  
Mr. Francis  
Mr. Right Hon. William  
Mr. Wm.  
Mr. C. S.  
Mr. J.  
Mr. Hon. D.  
Mr. R. B.  
Mr. John, Hon. A.

Addington, H.  
Anstruther, J.  
Barclay R.  
Barham, J. F.  
Barwell, R.  
Benfield, P.  
Berkeley, George  
Bernard, S.  
Blackburne, J.  
Brodie, A.  
Callander, J.  
Calthorpe, Sir H. G.  
Carew, R. P.  
Chiffwel, R. M. T.  
Cleveland, J.  
Clive, W.  
Crewe, John  
Davidson, D.  
Dawkins, J.  
Dent, J.  
Dickins, F.  
Downe, Viscount  
Dundas, R.  
Dundas, William  
Evelyn, Sir G. S.  
Ferguson, Sir A.  
Ferguson, J.  
Frederick, Sir J.  
Gamon, Sir R.  
Garthshore, W.  
Gascoyne, B.  
Garfoith, J. B.  
Gower, Lord G. L.  
Haynes, S.  
Heron, P.  
Home, P.  
Honeywood, Sir J.  
Hopkins, R.  
Jackson, Sir G.  
Jenkinson, Hon. R. B.  
Impey, Sir E.  
Keene, W.  
Langston, J.  
Lascelles, E.  
Lechmere, E.  
Lethicullier, E.  
Lushington, W.  
Mackreth, Sir R.  
Mainwaring, W.

Smith, S.  
 Smith, William  
 Smith, J.  
 Spencer, Lord Robert  
 Stanley, J. T.  
 Steele, T.  
 Thornton, S.  
 Thornton, R.  
 Thornton, H.  
 Townshend, Hon. C.  
 Whitbread, S.  
 Wilberforce, W.  
 Windham, Right Hon. W.  
 Winnington, Sir E.  
 Wood, R.

Manners, R.  
 Nesbitt, J.  
 Onslow, Hon. T.  
 Præd, W.  
 Rawdon, Hon. John  
 Rose, G.  
 Rose, G. H.  
 Ross, Sir C.  
 Sargent, J.  
 Scott, D.  
 Sheffield, Lord  
 Smith, General  
 Stanley, Thomas  
 Steward, G.  
 Strachey, H.  
 Sumner, G.  
 Tarleton, B.  
 Tarleton, J.  
 Trevelyan, J.  
 Vanneck, Sir J.  
 Walpole, H.  
 Wemyss, William  
 Wildman, T.  
 Williams, —  
 Wood, M.  
 Worcester, Lord  
 Wyndham, H. P.  
 Young, Sir William.

For the Abolition — 70 Against the Abolition — 7

*Wednesday, 16th March.*

Mr. MANNING rose to move the second reading of the dock bill. He observed, that this application of the merchants was not new. The merchants of London had applied for a measure so early as the year 1704. That application had been repeated in several succeeding years, down to the present time. After two years consideration, the present plan had been adopted as the most eligible. During this period, the corporation of the City of London, as well as every other public body interested in the matter, had sufficient notice of the intention of applying to Parliament for the want of wet docks was found an inconvenience a century ago. How much must that inconvenience be now increased by the advance of commerce of the city? He entered into a detail of the number of vessels that had entered the port of London at different periods, from the first application to Parliament on this subject, to show that the number had regularly increased; and observed, that the number of vessels that now entered that port, could not be accommodated by the London Bridge and Blackwall. He next took a view of the exports and imports of London at the following periods, when appli-

had been made to Parliament to pass an act for the better accommodation of the trade of the port of London, viz.

Imports.		Exports.
£.		£.
1704—4,314,793		4,812,000
1713—4,517,700		4,900,000

the years 1792 and 1793, the imports had been about twelve, and the exports fourteen millions. For this vast increase of commerce, it was to be expected that some accommodation should be made. The trade of the port of London, he observed, was equal to three-fifths of the trade of the whole kingdom. It was thirty years since the last application had been made to Parliament, and as no other persons had come forward to endeavour to remedy the evil, the merchants would have been greatly to blame had they neglected it longer. The foreign trade of the city of London had not increased in the same proportion as in other parts of the kingdom, owing to the want of proper accommodation. In proof of this, he stated, that from the year 1751, to 1793, the foreign trade had increased at different ports in the following proportions :

In London, at the rate of 4 to 1.

In Bristol, at the rate of 6 to 1.

In Hull, at the rate of 7 to 1.

In Liverpool, at the rate of 12 to 1.

He observed, that the spot chosen for the erection of the docks was every way proper for that purpose. It was within ten minutes walk of the custom house, and therefore was very favourable for the collection of the revenue. Petitions had been presented in favour of the bill from the East-India Company, and other great commercial bodies. As to the petitions against it, he would not say much, except that he would answer in general to all of them, that the bill secured all the rights of the city, and he was certain that no injury could arise to the city from the water of the river Thames being diverted, as was proposed by the plan. To shew, however, the erroneous grounds upon which such petitions were often founded, he took a retrospective view of the petitions that had been presented against the building of Westminster Bridge. The corporation of London had petitioned against the bill for erecting that bridge, and stated, that it would destroy their rights and privileges, greatly obstruct the trade and navigation of the river below London Bridge, and materially affect the interests of the city and individuals. Similar petitions had been presented from the borough of Southwark, Shadwell, and from the watermen and lightermen on the river, who complained, that if the bridge was

built, they would be obliged to seek their bread in foreign countries. The bridge, however, was built, and it had not yet been discovered to have done any injury to the parties who petitioned against it. He concluded by observing, that if the bill was passed into a law, it would greatly promote the trade of the city of London; he therefore moved,—“ That the bill be now read a second time.”

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG observed, that the plunder of the homeward-bound trade at the present wharfs was enormous, and the demurrage scarcely credible, which was not less ruinous to the merchants, than the defalcation was ruinous to the revenue.

Alderman LUSHINGTON declared, that it was the intention of the corporation of the city of London to come forward in the most liberal manner to redress those complaints to which the honourable Member adverted in his speech. He had no objection to the principle of the bill, as he agreed with his honourable friend that every attention should be given to the convenience of the shipping as necessary to the aid of the commerce of the country. He had certainly given a very flattering picture, and minute detail of the increase of our trade, and was, he had no doubt, actuated by motives the most honourable, as well as those gentlemen who embarked in the present undertaking. The bill was certainly so far advantageous, as it forced Parliament into a discussion that must ultimately prove advantageous to the country. But it behoved the House, a business of such importance, to pause, and consider if other plans may not be produced more advantageous to trade, and less liable to objection; and to attain this end, Parliament should certainly institute a Committee of Inquiry. That the plan proposed by his honourable friend was in many respects erroneous, he was authorized to assert from the conversation he had with the best-informed engineers; for it was certainly a subject on which he was not otherwise competent, from his own knowledge, to decide. It was impossible, as he was informed, for vessels to get into the proposed canal during nip tides, which lasted ten days, and spring tides only four days. A sum to the extent of 10 per cent. upon the original subscription was to be levied upon the trade of the port; and this too before any advantage was derived from it, for the plan was not to be completed till seven years after its commencement. He said, that the city, though acquainted with the agitation of the project, were not made acquainted with the plan till 24 hours before it was laid upon the table of this House. He said, that the city were seriously employed in preparing a plan. As a proof that they acted with liberality, no objection had been stated to the receiving of the petition for this plan; though, as having the conservation of the water



the Thames, the city should have been asked for leave to bring forward a plan which encroached upon this privilege. The question for the House then was, whether they would wait for new information, and admit a competition of plans? He was certain that the city would cheerfully concur with any plan which should be found of general utility. The city of London had now a plan upon paper, the expence of which would amount to 900,000*l*. The objects of this plan were,

1. To purchase the right of mooring chains in the river.
2. To project a bank into the river Thames to the extent of 40 feet.
3. To widen Thames Street from 30 to 70 feet.
4. To widen all the leading streets from the river.

This plan would be completed in three years, and would not require above a million sterling to carry it into effect. The other would take seven years before it could be completed, and an expence of three millions before any advantage could be derived from it. Before he moved the amendment, he thought it proper to state, that if he succeeded, he would follow it up with a motion for a Committee to inquire into the state of the port of London. In that Committee, the plan of the merchants might be first considered; but it would be open to the consideration of other plans also, and would determine to which the preference belonged. He concluded by moving the following amendment, viz. "That this day four months do stand in place of the word now."

The LORD MAYOR OF LONDON seconded the motion. He thought that the plan of the merchants would defeat itself. Their plan was meant only to accommodate two or three hundred ships out of 13,000, of which the shipping of London consisted. The entrance of the canal would be at the most difficult part of the river, and would be inaccessible during S. W. winds. The plan, he thought, by rendering watermen, lightermen, &c. superfluous, would injure one of the best nurseries of seamen. The conservation of the river in the city was equivalent to the right the Lord of a Manor had over property, who was always consulted in the project of canals to pass through that property. He, as sworn to maintain the privileges of the city, could not abandon this right without failing in his duty. He said that many of the losses complained of in vessels on the river arose from the negligence of the merchants themselves, and could not be affected by the Wet Dock bill plan. He enumerated a variety of abuses committed. He said that holidays should be abolished. The custom of the coopers was, in taking from a cask about two ounces of sugar for a sample, often

to take ten pounds; and a variety of other abuses of the same nature took place, from the negligence of the proprietors, so that the plunderages complained of were owing solely to themselves. The East India Company, by superior attention in this respect, he was sure, out of two millions, did not lose 200*l*. He said the city port would accommodate 900 ships in the docks, and that a plan had been executed by one of the first engineers in this country.

Mr. THORNTON gave an account of the erecting of new docks in Hull. That measure had been as unpopular there as it could possibly be here. There was but one person in the town who would venture to subscribe to them, and he was obliged afterwards to sell his share in consequence of the unpopularity of the measure. But what was the consequence of the erection of these docks? The revenue of the port, at the time they were built, did not exceed 70,000*l*. In three years, it rose to 140,000*l*, and now he believed he might state it at 200,000*l*. He then argued, that though the proposed accommodation was only for 3400 vessels, it was sufficient, because they were not to remain stationary, but would be continually changing. Thus the accommodation in rotation, would be equal to any purpose that could be wanted. As to the ten per cent. which was proposed to be levied for carrying the plan into effect, he was far from thinking it a heavy tax, for such a beneficial object.

Mr. SHERIDAN agreed with the worthy Magistrates in almost every thing they had said. It was incumbent upon the House to hear counsel for the parties who petitioned against the bill, and some time at least should be granted for this purpose. He saw no reason to doubt the sincerity of the city in wishing to bring forward a plan. The example of the conduct of the city on a former occasion, when an honourable gentleman had brought forward upon the principle of the bill, was set down in a celebrated pamphlet of late, that of visiting the sins of the ancestors upon their posterity, and it was only on this view that the corporation of London could be implicated in the folly of their predecessors. It might be argued, that any plan of this nature would hurt the city of London, as West-India merchants might assert that the abolition of the slave trade would ruin the trade with the colonics, and as it had been argued some years ago, that the commerce of this country would suffer by giving a free trade to the West-India land, a prediction falsified by the event; but arguments of this kind with him went for little or nothing. If the object could be effected with the consent of the city, he was convinced that merchants would not refuse the accommodation on these terms. It was said that

was not too high. — Indeed the honourable gentleman might consider it a very great profit, when 10 per cent was gained on a loan. The losses through plunderage surely must be very considerable, when a new word was made from the frequency of theft, and surely this was not a loss that the wet docks were called to remedy. But the great question, since it was agreed some plan was necessary, was, whether the purpose might not be well answered by the city plan? There was something at first very unfavourable in the appearance of this bill: though held out to be a private bill, it permitted very considerable sums to be levied from all British ships, although the accommodation would be confined chiefly to the West-India merchants. That 1700 houses should be pulled down, and 10,000 persons forced to seek new habitations, was such desolation at the commencement of a great improvement, as did not bespeak much favour. The ultimate effect certainly would be, to diminish the value of houses all over the city of London, and in time to attract the Exchange, the Bank-house, &c. to the place where the docks were to be made. He could have wished that a month or six weeks, or such a period, had been proposed for the delay of the bill, that time might be allowed as well to hear counsel of parties interested, as to bring forward any other plans that might be in agitation.

The Chancellor PITT said, he felt the importance of the subject before the House; and every man must feel a satisfaction at the success which created the present difficulty, as that cause was the interest of our trade, and therefore the principle of the bill was public. Although, correctly speaking, the bill might be called a private bill. That there should be done something for the general accommodation of the trade, he could have no hesitation to say. The principle of the bill was not merely to be considered; indeed upon this there could be no difficulty, for it was for the general accommodation of trade; but the question would be, whether the mode proposed by this particular act was proper to be adopted, and that it should be subject to the modification of a Committee, when the bill came to that stage. As to the amount of the interest in question, and whether all ships ought to pay towards it, or only particular ships receiving certain accommodation, all that was no objection to the general scope of the present subject. The principle of the bill led the House to inquire whether the trade of London ought to be accommodated better than it now is? Upon this he had a strong opinion in the affirmative; but he had some doubts in this respect on the point of order. When counsel came to argue on this point at the bar of the House, they might state, as the worthy



Magistrates and Representatives of the city of London did this, they might say they admit the grievance as stated in the bill, that they could furnish for that grievance a better remedy than which was proposed in the bill. This the House might be called upon to adopt, and would do so if convinced that the remedy was better, and should then, as in all such cases, be under the disagreeable necessity of compelling individuals who should object to the plan, and who had local interest to be affected by it, to accept a compensation for that interest. This too the House would be inclined to wave, if they could obtain their object without it. The bill could not be argued without allowing to the corporation of the city of London, and the proprietors of the legal quays, an opportunity to state their reasons at large against the plan upon the question of the general interest of the trade, as well as to state objections arising out of local interests. Now if this case was thus to be brought into at the bar of that House, there would be considerable difficulty in the case, and some perhaps upon the point of order, and that he should be glad to hear an opinion from the Chair. He should like to know whether, at the bar of the House, the parties would be at liberty to go into evidence not only on the part of the corporation of the city of London, and the proprietors of the legal quays, as their interests might be affected by the present bill, but also to shew the superior merit of the city plan. He was inclined to think that whatever might be the point of order, they might be permitted in a condition, where they would be at liberty to do it. In point of convenience, however, to the trade, an expeditious mode ought to be adopted, so that the object should be obtained in the course of the present session. He therefore thought that only two days in the week, which was the regular course of proceeding in hearing cases at the bar of that House, would make it impossible to bring this matter, which ought to be done as soon as possible, to a conclusion this session. He wanted this object to be attained as speedily as possible, and that this bill should pass if no better mode could be adopted to remedy the evil. He claimed this not only on the ground of national interest, of itself decisive, but also for the interest of the parties immediately concerned. It was true indeed that the corporation of the city of London now come forward with a plan which they say will answer the purpose of all the trade, better than which was proposed in the bill; but when the complaint had been so long standing, and the merchants had given the city so much time to come forward, and when they were so late in producing their plan, the House had a right to be a little jealous of the sincerity of the city, and they should not object to the mode proposed in

bill, until they should be sure that the city plan presented a mode for remedying the evil. Now what conclusion did he draw from all this, certainly not that the present bill should be put off four months; if that should be agreed to, the bill could not be brought in this session, and therefore if that amendment was persisted in, it would meet it with a direct negative. This he was warranted to say from the arguments of the representatives of the city, who were in favour of the bill; for they all tended to support the principle of the bill, and suggested a better mode of carrying that principle into effect. He would say then the city of London could not be entitled to a delay, until they proved their mode was preferable to that which was proposed in the present bill. He must therefore hear a great deal of evidence before he should consent to the delay, which would go to a rejection of this bill. In this view of the subject, the friends of the bill were entitled to have the second reading now, and to require their opponents to prove at the bar of the House, that their plan was a better one. But if gentlemen, seeing the great delay which would arise by hearing evidence on both sides at the bar of the House, would agree to having a Committee up stairs, then it might be proper to postpone the second reading of the bill to an early day after the holidays, for the purpose of seeing whether the city of London could, within a fortnight or three weeks, or some such period, propose a plan that would answer the purpose better than that which was proposed to be done by the present bill. This seemed to him to be a fair and just mode of doing justice between the parties, without losing sight of the public interest. He should therefore move an amendment to the present bill, that, instead of this day four months, be substituted the 1st of April next. Then he should be ready to meet the idea of referring the plans to a Committee, who might sit every day, notwithstanding any adjournment of the House; and, if the city be desirous to carry the subject through properly, they would go forward with their plan. Certainly, the public should have the benefit of the mode proposed by the present bill, unless a better mode be proposed. It should be remembered that if this bill be rejected, another bill could not be had in the present session, according to the rules of the House. If, however, it could be proved that a better plan could be adopted, it might hereafter be brought in, and in the mean time this should go on. He therefore moved, "That instead of the words this day four months, be substituted the words, Wednesday, the 11th of April next."

The SPEAKER said, that he felt a considerable degree of difficulty in stating the point of form which had been referred to him by the right honourable gentleman. The object of the present bill

was to accommodate the shipping in the port of London better than they are at present. To this bill, brought in by the merchants, the city of London objected, on the ground that they could accomplish the same purpose by more eligible means; and leave had been given to the city to be heard by their counsel against the bill. In the superiority of the plan which they had to suggest, formed by their objections to the bill in its present form, they could not, in his opinion, be prohibited from stating the outlines of that plan. Their objections to the bill. Of this the Eau Brink Drainage Bill afforded a precedent. But he took the liberty to remind the House that the evidence would perhaps go to a considerable length, and therefore he would submit whether it might not be proper, for the sake of expediting the business, to appoint an antecedent Committee.

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON observed, it was by no means the object of his amendment to get rid of the bill before the House, but merely to give to the city of London an opportunity of laying their plan before a Committee, for them to see whether it was not better than that which was proposed by the bill. He therefore had no objection to withdraw his amendment, on condition that the amendment proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was adopted.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that the House could not well proceed farther at present, than to name a day for the second reading of the bill. He begged that it might be understood, that by consenting to the Committee up stairs, the petitioners withdrew their claim to be heard by their counsel, on the second reading of the bill, if they did not agree to the Report of the Select Committee.

Mr. RYDER said, that the proper place for them to state their objections, would be to the Committee.

General SMITH said a few words in favour of the bill, and hoped that no unnecessary delay would take place in its passage through the House.

Sir WATKIN LEWES vindicated the conduct of the House of London through the whole of the business.

The second reading of the bill was fixed for the 11th of April, and an open Committee appointed to inquire into the best mode of accommodating the increase of shipping in the port of London.

The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 17th March.*

Mr. CURWEN brought in a bill for the repeal of certain parts of the game laws, which was read a first time; and, on motion for the second reading,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the bill was of the utmost

...ce, and involved questions of such magnitude, that he thought members should come to some immediate decision respecting it. It was of such an important nature, that he was against its lying until next session: he wished it to be quickly decided, and suffered to be afloat to agitate men's minds. He therefore was inclined to think, that the bill ought to be printed, and then allowed to lie over for some time, at least till after the recess, to give members opportunity to consider its principle and provisions. In this idea, he wished to defer the second reading till after Easter; but if it met the approbation of the House, would fix the 18th of April for that stage. He also suggested, that in the mean time, the bill should be printed for the use of the members. At present he would not say more; but merely hoped, from the national importance of the measure, that it would be decided on in the course of this session.

Mr. CURWEN thought, with the right honourable gentleman, that the measure was of considerable importance, and, that the House ought to be allowed time and opportunity duly to consider its magnitude. In this idea, he was not adverse to its being printed, but deferring the second reading till after Easter.—And, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was pleased to mention the 18th of April as a proper day, he would, with the leave of the House, fix that day for the second reading.

General SMITH was of opinion, that an opportunity should be taken in the present session to reject the measure, if the House were inclined to do so: and, therefore, he was adverse to postponing the bill to any length of time.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that it was for this reason that he had deferred time till after the recess for the second reading, that gentlemen might give it every consideration and attention in their power. After that time, the House thought its principle and provisions important, they might reject it; and he was free to say, that he wished it to be soon decided.

The second reading was then fixed for Monday the 18th of April; and on the motion of Mr. Curwen, a sufficient number of copies for the use of the members, were ordered to be printed.

*Friday, 18th March.*

The bill for granting a bounty on the importation of corn was taken a second time, and committed for Monday.

Lord SHEFFIELD suggested to the House that some effectual measures should be adopted to prevent the exportation of molasses, and the stoppage of the distilleries, and to preserve to Govern-



ment the revenue arising from distilleries, by permitting the im-  
tation of molasses, in neutral bottoms.

Mr. ROSE said, that the subject was under consideration, that as soon as any decision was come to, it would be submitted to the House.

Mr. POWYS said, that the general inclosure was founded on two distinct principles, which ought to be framed into two separate bills, to enable proprietors to inclose by general consent, and to give the majority a power of compelling the minority. He gave notice, that on Monday next he would move for an instruction to the Committee to that purpose.

*Monday, 20th March.*

The House went into a Committee on the bill for regulating the grinding of corn, &c.

Mr. POPHAM said, that in a future stage of this bill he intended to bring up a clause, for obliging millers to grind when demanded, upon any application being made to them for the purpose, on the same principle as innkeepers were obliged to entertain travellers; he stated it as a great hardship that when a poor man brought his corn, he should not be certain of having it ground.

Mr. FRANCIS allowed that such a provision would be serviceable, but thought it would be much better to teach the poor to grind their corn by means of little hand mills, on a simple construction such as he had before mentioned in the House. After a few observations, the House resumed; the report was received, and the bill was ordered to be recommitted on Thursday the 17th of April.

Mr. POWYS wished to call the attention of the House again to the same object which he had proposed on a former night. There were two purposes which the Select Committee had in view; the first was for enabling proprietors to agree amongst themselves, and to put into effect, the inclosure of common lands: the other was to compel those who were not willing to assent: these were so distinct in their natures, that they never could be blended in one common bill. To the former he had no objection; but the other object he would oppose. He wished, therefore, that these distinct propositions might be separated: by that means, the first would pass without opposition, whilst the other, on which many doubts were entertained, would come under particular discussion. He then concluded by moving, "That it be an instruction to the Committee, to withdraw the bill for the appropriation of waste lands is referred, that they have power to divide the said bill into two bills, if they think

Sir RICHARD SUTTON seconded the motion.

JOHN SINCLAIR thought that such a measure would be productive of delay, but would defeat the object of the bill. He considered it proper that the minority should be allowed to comply with a measure for the general interest.

SHEFFIELD said, he was sorry to differ from his friend who made the motion. The bill, if separated as it was, would be perfectly useless. The object of the Legislature was, not only to facilitate but also to encourage, and as much as possible to force an inclosure; that it was now perfectly well understood, that on the average of years the quantity of land now in Great Britain did not subsist its inhabitants; that he thought the public five years ago, unless some means were used to increase the tillage of the country, we should frequently find ourselves in an alarming and precarious dependance on foreign countries (in the present case) for our subsistence; that if the cultivation of lands was suffered to depend on general consent, an inclosure would never take place; that so great a good should not be sacrificed to the insignificant whim of a few individuals; that the quantity of land uncultivated in England was a disgrace to the country, and the like was not to be observed in any other country in Europe. Some gentlemen had said, that much waste lands were as useful in their present state, as they would be rendered by cultivation; he entirely disagreed with them; if they were a nuisance to the country, they were the nests of thieves and idlers, that they drew the people from their regular employments; that those lands if brought into cultivation, one part would be employed in raising cattle, in the place of those miserable animals which are not to be seen in any other country, and the other part would be employed in raising that corn, for which we were paying such immense sums to foreigners when we can

FRANCIS said, that it might happen that a minority in the House may possess the larger share of property; in such case it would be proper to make exceptions; however, he thought that in the event of the present bill, these purposes might be effected by the introduction of fresh clauses, as well as by separate bills, which would be productive of delay.

BURDON was of opinion, that by delay we should lose the advantages arising from an immediate inclosure.

HUSSEY said, that he at first hoped that the bill would be attended with very beneficial consequences, but when he took it into consideration with him, he saw, from the second page, that it was a bad bill to hold out to the people, that it would prevent the possi-

bility of a returning scarcity : he was sorry to read an exception all the King's forests—the New Forests, &c. Why, he should these lands remain uncultivated? they were, in fact, waste lands of the kingdom. He contended, that these should be first cultivated, and, as he would wish to see even in the kingdom inclosed, they should then begin the cultivation of common and other waste lands.

Mr. RYDER thought it would be better to let the bill take its usual course.

Mr. POWYS said, that his objection was not on any point of the quantity of property in the majority and minority ; that Parliament ought not to delegate into other hands, the power of compelling any minority to consent ; he contended, that any individual proprietor was compelled to consent, he should be heard by Parliament, who would then act as it saw fit.

Mr. GREY agreed with Mr. Powys, that this was a great power, and Parliament ought not to depute it to other hands. He thought, as many applications would necessarily be made, it would be proper that private bills of compulsion should be made at public expence.

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN said, that the reason why the Crown lands were excepted, was, not because of their being private property, but because there was at present a Commission to inquire into the state of the Crown lands, and that a plan would be brought forward by the Commissioners in proper time, well digested and considered, which would make the forests productive, and afford a sufficient quantity of timber for the navy.

Mr. FOX agreed with Mr. Hussey, that the Crown lands should be first cultivated. With respect to the proposal of dividing the bill into two, he thought that it was a very proper measure, by that means gentlemen's doubts with regard to one measure should not impede the course of the others through the House.

After some farther conversation, Mr. Powys's motion was carried without a division.

Mr. FRANCIS rose to give notice of his intention to take the first convenient opportunity after the recess, to bring forward a proposition concerning the state of the negroes in the West-India islands. That in order not to load himself with unnecessary difficulties, he made an attempt sufficiently arduous in itself, and perhaps above his strength, by exciting groundless suspicions, and provoking a superstitious disposition to oppose his intended proposition, before it was understood, he would now state shortly to the House, not what his proposition was, but what it was not. It did not relate at all to the ab-

slave trade, nor to the manumission of the slaves now in the

His purpose was to provide for another interest, which, opinion, though certainly not neglected, had never been considered, nor rationally promoted, on sound principles of either to the master or the slave; he meant the real of the proprietor himself. If through that medium the of the slave could be improved, he hoped it would not be tion to his proposition. It was true, he had not till very thought of taking an active part, upon a subject, which, in laws, had been so long debated, and to so little purpose. An unfortunate vote on the slave trade had determined him to ward. On one point only he thought it necessary to make it declaration, to shelter himself from personal reproach or

It was true that he had taken his resolution, and that, at he saw no reason to think it at all likely that he should not o it. Nevertheless, it was possible, that in the interval, tions might occur or be suggested to him, by men wiser self, whom he meant to consult, that insurmountable es, or strong prudential objections, might deter or divert a pursuing his present purpose. If so, the House would hear of it; but, if he persevered in his design, of which at pread no doubt, the House might be assured that he would mind to it with all the industry of which he was capable, every exertion of whatever faculties he possessed.

al MACLEOD said, that the motion which he was about t to the House, with the grounds upon which it rested, in- ch important principles, that he felt it to be a task beyond rs. Not only the honour of the country, but the interests nity were at stake, as well for the present, as for ages to s a mode of carrying on war had lately been practised, bor- om a precedent of Spanish cruelty, and threatening to de- e character of the English nation in the eyes of Europe, and rld. Before he entered on the subject, however, he found him- d upon to wipe off certain calumnies with which he had been since he last mentioned the business in the House. He had used, both in print and common conversation, of being by private malice and hypocrisy. He had been charged amniating the character of a noble Lord under a mask of p. He was free to avow, in reply to this false and cruel on, that he was incapable of entertaining sentiments of malice against any man, far less against a person whom he a man, and respected as an accomplished soldier, and a ith whom he had always lived in habits of the strictest in-



timacy. Was this a person whose character he could be supposed of being anxious to traduce? It had been said also that he was to stab the characters of Ministers through the sides of the Lord. He certainly reprobated the conduct of the war as led from blunder to blunder, and from crime to crime; but he appeared to the House, if, when he brought the business forward on a Friday, he did not acquit the Executive Government of having no concern in the matter; an acquittal which was certainly justified by the astonishment which the communication of the fact seemed to produce upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Having thus endeavoured to vindicate his character, he proceeded to the details of the facts. Formerly he had rested what he said, merely upon a paper paragraph, which certainly was not information sufficiently authentic for the House to ground any proceeding upon. He had in his possession, a letter from Kingstown, Jamaica, ascertaining the fact. It was to be remarked, that this was a letter from a private person, entirely unconnected with the Government of Jamaica, and that the writer entirely approved of the mode of dealing with the Maroons with blood hounds. It was proper to know, in the first place, who are these Maroons. They are men, said he, and the circumstance of their being men, one would think, is sufficient to shew that they ought not to be hunted with blood-hounds. They were not only men, but freemen, whom we were bound to protect. It was necessary, in the next place, to know what are these blood-hounds. They were employed by the Spaniards in the quest of the New World, for the purpose of exterminating the inhabitants. And these blood-hounds, the use of which in this country has affixed an indelible stain on the character of the Spanish nation at the end of the eighteenth century, are adopted by this country as instruments of war. Here the honourable General quoted a passage from Bartholomew de las Casas, a monk, who by his zeal in the cause of humanity, has gained more lasting renown than the Monarch of the age in which he lived. This writer described the Spaniards as feeding their hounds upon human flesh, to gratify them with a fierce, and a ravenous appetite; and, as saying to another, give a quarter of an infant for a feast to my dog. He boasted sometimes that his dog, on one morning, had killed twenty men—speaking as if they had been wolves or wild boars. A couple then of these blood-hounds attended, with thirty Spanish chasscurs, had been imported from the island of Cuba, for the purpose of exterminating the Maroons in Jamaica. But what were the sportsmen? West-India planters, British soldiers, British officers, and British Generals! If such a stain was not put

ded off from the national character, the annals of His Majesty's reign would be more shamefully blotted than those of any reign, from the time of Philip the Second, and Charles the Fifth of Spain. Was this war, which was so cruelly conducted, a just war? Its justice had never been shewn. But the blood-hounds were not, in fact, employed in the prosecution of the war; they were employed to hunt out the Maroons, after they had hid themselves in the recesses of the mountains, and ceased to commit hostilities. He had read in his youth the works of Puffendorff and Grotius, and he could recollect that they reprobated all improper instruments of war as unjust; and the principle on which they did so was one which should be familiar to every man, that they tend unnecessarily to increase the natural horrors of war. It had been said, that these Maroons had been set on by the French. If this was the case, what effect would this produce on the French as an enemy? Were we sure of retaining all our West-India islands; he was afraid not. Supposing, then, Grenada or St. Vincent's was to be taken by the French, might not they also send to Cuba for blood-hounds, and practise those severities of which we have shewn them the example? Did the French set them on. Who set on the Loyalists in Marquette, or who set on the Chouans in La Vendee? And because the French commit unjustifiable actions, did this afford any plea to follow their example? The Chouans were now broken down, and perhaps, on the restoration of peace, the French might find it necessary to have recourse to great severities against the remnants of that party. Perhaps they might send to Cuba for blood-hounds to exterminate them, in imitation of the infamous example which Great Britain had shewn. He hoped he had said enough to excite the indignation of the House, and to inspire them with a zeal to vindicate their own honour and that of the nation, by an inquiry into a business of such a shocking nature, and of so alarming consequences; in the mean time he would merely move, "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, that he may be pleased to order, that there be laid before this House, a copy of all the correspondence of which Government is in possession, relative to the mode of carrying on war against the Maroons in Jamaica." Mr. DUNDAS said, that he would not trouble the House with any words upon the present occasion. He was possessed of no authentic information upon the subject, that he could offer to the House. He considered that many inconveniences might arise from the motion that had now been made, and he hoped that he would be able to satisfy the House, and even the honourable gentleman himself, of the impropriety of it. The honourable gentleman had

taken it for granted that the war with the Maroons was unjust, originated in aggression on our part. It should be remembered, however, that it had its rise in an insurrection of the Maroons, provoked by any aggression or ill usage, and that no part of it is to be ascribed to the conduct of the assemblies or of the inhabitants of Jamaica. He knew that, ever since this insurrection, the island of Jamaica had been in a state of the greatest alarm and danger which could possibly be conceived. The Maroons were accustomed to descend from their fastnesses at midnight, and commit the dreadful ravages and cruelties upon the wives, children, and property of the inhabitants, burning and destroying every place which they attacked, and murdering all who unfortunately became the objects of their fury. In this difficult and distressing situation, the militia of the island were constantly in arms, and forced to be always prepared for defence. He did not understand that the purpose of the dogs was such as had been stated, nor were they to be employed in the barbarous way that had been represented. He understood that in the island of Cuba, these dogs were used to prevent negroes from running away, and merely to seize and retain them, and not to tear and mangle them with that cruelty which was described as the honourable mover. The account given in the book quoted by the honourable gentleman, he doubted not was greatly exaggerated, but however it might be a just picture of the former practice, it was not applicable to present times. Upon this point he professed not to be perfectly informed, but he did not understand that the description given by the honourable gentleman was the real and true state of the matter. The grounds stated for the motion certainly were insufficient and inconclusive. He confessed he had heard of the fact, but his chief objection was, that any information which could be laid before the House was lame and unsatisfactory. He admitted, that the employment of these dogs was not in consequence of any direction of Ministers here. If the Assembly of Jamaica had caused such an application of them to be made, which he did not imagine was the case, it was surely unjust to lay the blame on the Ministers. It was not requiring much from the House to require of them to believe that His Majesty, or even Ministers themselves, on the first intimation, would adopt such measures as would prohibit or prohibit the use of dogs in the manner that was reproved. This surely Ministers might easily be supposed to have done. When the character of an absent Governor, whose conduct hitherto commanded the greatest approbation, was involved in a motion which hoped the House would see the impropriety of pushing any further, a motion on such slight foundation, and which would appear



considering the steps already taken to prevent the employment of the blood-hounds in the way the honourable gentleman had stated.

Mr. BARHAM said, that he found himself impelled to trouble the House with a few observations, and to give such an explanation as necessary to justify the character of a noble Lord, who had styled himself as Governor of Jamaica, in such a manner as to attract the unanimous approbation of the inhabitants and planters. He was not personally acquainted with the noble Lord, but he knew no man was ranked higher for honour and humanity. The motion on which the honourable gentleman rested, was not sufficient ground for the motion he had brought forward. There were several in the letter he had quoted, that appeared to destroy its utility. From the application of the honourable gentleman to one passage that alluded to Mr. Wilberforce, he was convinced that it was little to be relied upon. However he had differed from that honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce), he had respected the humanity of his heart and the rectitude of his intentions, and he knew in the West Indies he was regarded in the same light. He was convinced, from the information he possessed, that the dogs had not been procured for the purpose that had been stated. The old book quoted by the honourable gentleman, gave, he thought, a very unjust description of the way in which they were employed. Dogs were used in this country in the same manner. Freemen knew that dogs were often used for the protection of the plantation, and to trace out deer-stealers. These hounds then were not employed to track out the Maroons, and by no means to mangle them. What, however, was the object of the war, since war it was to be called, very improperly in his opinion? Was it for the protection of the inhabitants against the desperate and murderous attacks of the Maroons, who came down upon them, burning and destroying every thing. They consisted of about 400, and were not like an ordinary enemy, but were like a gang of robbers who might seize upon some forest or mountain, and commit depredations upon the country. It was a question, he thought, if any other means could be found effectual to prevent the ravages of these murderous bands, whether it might not be justifiable to attempt to root them out in the way that the war is now said to be carried on. They were represented as freemen, and therefore entitled to be treated with more humanity: but he could assure the House, that in Jamaica, the state of slaves by no means prevented them from being treated with the same humanity displayed to others of a different condition. The cause of the insurrection had been the

punishment of a Maroon, according to the mild system of the island for an offence that by the laws of this country would have been punished with death. To the Maroons, since that time, the most favourable offers had been made, but they had persevered in refusing all terms.

Mr. MAURICE ROBINSON said, that the information on which he had ground for the address, he had thought insufficient, but the facts stated seemed now to be confessed, and might therefore furnish sufficient ground for the House taking up the subject. If the number of the Maroons was only three or four hundred, it was surely unnecessary to employ means of warfare so abhorrent to human nature.

Mr. SHERIDAN did not think it necessary to trouble the House long on the present question, after what had fallen from the honourable Secretary. It gave him the greatest satisfaction to hear that the Government had ordered an inquiry to be made into this transaction immediately after the report of it came to their knowledge. He had heard with much concern what fell from an honourable gentleman near him, (Mr. Barham) because it carried with it the idea of extirpating a whole race of people. This he could not sufficiently reprobate; and surely the savage means used to overcome those unfortunate men were not necessary, when their number was stated so low as four or five hundred. It was surprising, and without the abominable aid of blood-hounds, the whole force of Jamaica could not succeed in subduing those unfortunate Maroons who, by oppression, the breach of treaty on the part of the English, and in vindication of their rights, had been driven to take up arms. So far by the blessing of God, at least the resistance of a minor power acting on just principles in one quarter of the globe was at least formidable. The honourable gentleman who spoke last, asserts that they were not to be treated as Maroons but rebels. Now it seemed that the resistance of an independent nation, with whom this country signed a solemn treaty, which it afterwards violated, was to be considered as a state of rebellion. But there was no ground which could justify the use of blood-hounds, and it was unnecessary for him to state what the House well knew, that it was not only just and politic, to abate as much as possible the rigours and horrors of war. The present objects of the war in Jamaica, seemed to be the expiation of this unhappy people, or to drive them by cruelty, to nourish such a resentment of their wrongs, as to render them incapable in future, of observing amity or good will towards their enemies. The honourable gentleman opposite to him seemed to consider it as of little importance whether the war was just on our part or not. He was of a contrary opinion. The idea of extermination, alw

and unjust, was certainly much aggravated, if it turned out these people were at war with us merely because they had injured. The Maroons were in fact an independent people. They were a useful race, and even in a commercial view were of considerable advantage to the country. The honourable gentleman mentioned the origin of the war, but he had not stated all the circumstances. It originated in a Maroon stealing a pig, but his punishment was a violation of a treaty which subsisted between the white settlers and the people. He was whipped. The man returned with the stripes on his back to his nation. It was an article of the treaty that no Maroon should be punished by the government of Jamaica: but if he committed a crime that he should be given up to his own nation for punishment. In the present case this article was evidently infringed. Redress was demanded of the Maroons, and as no redress was given, war followed. For the honour of the national character, it was necessary, that an inquiry should be instituted. If the Maroons were injured, a war of extermination could not be contemplated without the utmost necessity. He hoped, however, that something would be done to bring back this people to that state of harmony and good will which had been found so necessary for the peace, and in some degree to the prosperity of the island.

Mr. BARHAM said he did not conceive it to be a point disputed, that the war was just on our part; that the Maroons had been provoked. With regard to the extermination of the Maroons, he confessed he did not see how it could be otherwise, while the Maroons were determined to commit murder.

Mr. COURTENAY observed, that the honourable Secretary said that he believed the war to be just on the part of the white settlers. This, however, would not appear to the House an argument of any weight, because it was merely an assertion, and came without any proof or authority whatever. It had been said, that the blood-hounds were employed only to pursue and discover the lurking-places of the Maroons; but he believed, that when such dogs were set on for a purpose of this kind, they would not stop at merely finding the fugitive, and pointing him out to the pursuer. In a private letter from Jamaica, it was stated, that two of these dogs had set on a soldier's wife on the beach, and that two soldiers were obliged to bayonet them in order to save her life. If the animals were so ferocious when not set on, what was to be expected from them when they were properly trained to this horrid business, and hunted on by Spanish Chasseurs. The book that had been quoted by his honourable friend, had been mentioned with

an air of ridicule by the honourable gentleman near him. he know that the author was Las Casas, so justly celebrated for candour and veracity, and who was quoted as the highest authority by Dr. Robertson, in his History of America? It had said, that these Maroons came down from the mountains to murder during the night. This too was a mere assertion, and totally void of truth. But was it not strange that 500 men should oppose the whole armed force of the island of Jamaica, and oblige the government to put the inhabitants under military law, and permit a mode of warfare so discordant to the feelings of British soldiers? He meant no reflection on the noble Lord, who presided on the island. He had the honour to know him, and he was adorned with every virtue that belonged to the gentleman and the soldier. But he believed he might have been induced to allow this transaction, though contrary to his inclination. If all the planters persisted upon this mode of warfare, it certainly would not be for him to prevent it; and he might feel himself obliged to consent to that which neither accorded with his spirit nor humanity.

Grotius and Vattel had been alluded to, and perhaps it might be said, as they, in enumerating the instruments of war which were not lawful, had not mentioned blood-hounds, that therefore it was lawful to use them. This would be similar reasoning to that which occurred in an action respecting assignats forged for the purpose of circulation on the Continent. A noble lord observed in Westminster-hall, that Grotius, Vattel, and others had enumerated the instruments which ought not to be used in war; but none of these authors said a word about false assignats, he could say that they might not be fairly employed in carrying on the present just and necessary war against our enemies. He then adverted to the treaty which had been entered into with the Maroons. When it was made, he observed, in the year 1783; and it was expressly stipulated, that when a Maroon should commit a crime, he was not to be punished, but given up to his nation. This article insisted upon by them, that they might not be subjected to corporal punishment by the planters, which they considered the most disgraceful of all punishments, and the greatest misfortune that could befall them. It was corporal punishment which was the cause of their original insurrection, and to be freed from it they would counter any danger.—Like all other savages, their passions were strong, and their resentment of injuries indiscriminating and insatiable; but they were susceptible of reconciliation. Let, then, compassion and friendship be offered, and their passions may be made to flow with no less violence in the opposite stream of affection.



de. The paucity of their numbers was another circumstance which added to the shame which must result from so cruel and unprecedented a mode of attack. In the year 1770, their number was only 885. In 1773, they amounted to 1028. In 1775, they were 1323. Taking, therefore, the men capable of bearing arms at one-third of this last number, they would only amount to 400. But extermination had been talked so much of on a larger scale, that Mr. Courtenay was not surprised to find it done in this. As the champions of religion and humanity, kindled the flames of war from one end of Europe to the other. This war, we had threatened to carry on to extermination. For the preservation of morality, were we to commit the most atrocious of all actions; and for the preservation of social order, to lay over the face of the earth confusion, bloodshed, and death. The talk of exterminating this handful of brave men, who had shown such a noble resistance, was the very acme of wickedness and cruelty, and would fix an indelible stain on the British character. If we had broke the first article of the treaty, we must stand by the consequences. What have we to complain of the descents of the Maroons from their mountains, when the mode of warfare practised on by us is so much worse than theirs? We were now to be humble copiers of the cruelties of the Spaniards, whose inhumanity we had hitherto always condemned.

MR. DENT spoke against the motion. He expatiated on the necessity of the Maroons, and the necessity of repressing them by the means that could possibly be suggested. In illustration of his argument, he related a story of sixteen gentlemen, who were taken by the Maroons in one of the smaller West-India islands. The Maroons insisted that they should give up the government of the island into their hands, and upon the refusal of the gentlemen, they put them all to death. The two last to suffer were a Mr. Campbell and a Mr. Horne—one of them said, he was certain there was not a negroe on the whole island that would injure him, upon which a black negroe, who commanded the Maroons, put him to death with his own hands. He then entered into the argument, that the blood-hounds were only used for the purposes of tracking the footsteps, and discovering the haunts of the Maroons: and concluded by observing, that as gentlemen seemed to have such a sympathy to this species of dogs, they would certainly have no objection to his proposing a treble tax on them, when the question of imposing a tax on dogs came to be discussed on Thursday next.

General MACLEOD rose to observe, that in consequence of what

had fallen from the right honourable Secretary of State, he would not press this business farther at present. He begged, however, that it should not be considered that he totally relinquished it. He would never quit the subject until the evil was redressed - he stuck as fast to it as those dogs did to their prey. The right honourable gentleman had, however, assured the House, that orders in inquiry into this transaction had already been dispatched by Government. He hoped these orders would be duly enforced to render any farther notice of the business in Parliament unnecessary. If not, he pledged himself to bring it forward again, should he find that none more adequate to the task was inclined to undertake it; but he now conceived it proper to "move for leave to withdraw his motion."—Leave granted.

*Tuesday, 22nd March.*

Mr. LECHMERE observed, that he had lately some conversation with the Secretary of the Treasury on the subject of the motion with which he should have concluded what he had to say to-day in the House. That gentleman had behaved with considerable candour and liberality to him. He was persuaded that it would never be thought by some persons, there were considerable quantities of corn exported even now to the enemy under various pretences. It was his object to prevent, if possible, the continuance of such illicit practices, and thereby to relieve the industrious poor of this country; for which purpose it was necessary for him to call on the House to examine the exportation of corn from this country, in the course of two years of the American war, the years 1776 and 1777, and two of the years of the present happy contest, the years 1794 and 1795, to compare the exportations with each other, and then they would see that there had been a great deal of the illicit traffic of which he complained. He should hereafter have some farther observations to make on this subject. He should now only move, "That there be laid before the House an account of the quantity of corn exported from Great Britain in the years 1776 and 1777, and the years 1794 and 1795, distinguishing each year, and the ports from which the same were exported, and the quantities exported from each port."

Mr. LONG said, he had no objection to the motion itself, but he should have a great objection to the ground on which the right honourable gentleman stated the necessity of it; for that ground there was no foundation. A very little of the exportation of corn, the honourable gentleman complained had taken place. He

there had not actually been any, but he was well assured, the best possible information, from the different ports, that no corn had been but very little indeed. He said this because he would be very sorry an idea should go forth that much corn had been exported from this country. The fact was otherwise; he had no objection to the motion of the honourable gentleman. The motion was then put and carried.

Chancellor PITT then moved the order of the day, to bring to farther consideration the report of the Committee on the bill for allowing certain additional duties on legacies, &c. The order being read, he moved that the House do now take the report into consideration.

Alderman NEWNHAM said, it was with great reluctance he rose to oppose a tax for the public service at a time when every body knew that taxes were so much wanted, but he felt himself called upon by his duty to do so. He felt objections to this bill, which, to his mind, were insurmountable. What impression it would be able to make on the House he could not tell. He would endeavour to do his duty with firmness. First, then, he would say he objected to this tax on account of the inquisitorial part of it.

Very unpleasant sensations must be felt by any man who was taxed, that by this bill, should it pass into a law, an exact account of his circumstances in life might become the conversation and amusement of the loungers of a common coffee-house.—For the Government should not be satisfied by the account given in by the taxpayer, but there was to be an inquisitorial power, in order to examine the whole of his accounts, to open his books, to pry into the secrets of his trade, and to investigate the statement of his circumstances, by which means every thing belonging to a man's conduct would be liable to public exposure. This was a hardship to an extent, and entirely new in this country. There might be circumstances which a man might very fairly and very prudently wish to conceal, even from his partner in trade; but by this bill every thing was to be exposed to the public at large. This subjected all descriptions of men, particularly commercial men, to the most serious inconveniencies.

He believed that all the objections to which this bill was liable, had not yet properly been presented to the minds of the public; and if they should, he was confident the tax would be a very unpopular one. It was a tax on the bounty of a man to a well-tryed and approved friend or domestic, and that to the great amount of 10 per cent. This was intolerable. There was a description of persons not acknowledged by the law, for whom a man might, very



properly, have a tender affection, who would feel severe effects of this bill: He meant illegitimate children. By this they were put upon a footing with absolute strangers to the property. A tax of six per cent. was laid as a duty upon every thing that a parent might leave to them. The bill stated what was to be done by those who should take upon them the burden of executors, a burden it would be with a vengeance if this bill passed. None but an attorney would be qualified to be an executor; and no one should venture to become an executor without an attorney at his elbow. This was another observation which he could not help making, and that was, that he did not like the mode which had been adopted in carrying on this plan for a tax. The original plan had been to divide the landed property into one bill, the personal property into another. He wished them both to come together, that the public might fairly see the extent to which this was to be carried. He believed indeed, that when the landed property bill should be brought forward, the opposition to it would be so great, that the Minister would be compelled to abandon it. Having said so much as to the situation of natural children, he must now ask, what was the situation of uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, brothers, and sisters. They must all pay their proportion of the tax for every thing that they left to them. This appeared to him to be an alarming plan of opposition, and he was sorry to observe the House so inattentive to the effect of it. Gentlemen, if they saw the mischief in the line which he did, would not rest upon their arms as they seemed to do. He would venture to foretell, that when this bill came to be understood by the public, there would be a terrible outcry against it. He wished the Minister had made this measure general, that the public might see to what they were in reality giving their consent when they entertained this bill; for if this passed, something more extensive upon the same plan might follow, and he knew not where we were to stop. He wished other gentlemen more able than himself to take up this matter; he was not accustomed much to public speaking, and could not deliver his sentiments in that House so freely and without embarrassment as he might in private with his acquaintances; but this bill appeared to him to be so objectionable that he could not help opposing it. He hoped that what he had said would induce other gentlemen to adopt the same line of conduct. At this point he had to state, and then he should conclude. This was a tax which was to operate chiefly upon our posterity, and it was that account necessary to be more than ordinarily careful. He had incurred debts, why did we not tax ourselves? The debt we must be paid; but he would say, let us pay, and do not

er such loads of it to those who are yet unborn. He then  
d, that instead of the word "now," be substituted "this day  
months."

r. RASHLEIGH seconded the amendment. The exposure  
property, he said, which would be necessarily consequent upon  
eration of this bill, would be in the highest degree prejudicial  
de. The House must know that many traders, of the best  
ster and the fairest intentions, extended their speculations in  
to double or triple their capital; and it might hurt their credit,  
the exact state of their property should be laid open to the  
. How many inconveniences would arise, he would ask, to  
the debts and credits of a foreign correspondence? It was  
ly necessary for him to state that they would be endless. The  
ty of many persons might consist of cabinets of pictures, &c.  
it might be the wish of the best-intentioned men not to have  
ed. Whereas, if the Commissioners of the Stamps should  
that the proprietors had undervalued this secret property, they  
power of investigating it. He considered that this bill would  
uce litigation, and on that account alone he would oppose it,  
had no other reason. The former stages of this bill had  
in very thin Houses; if it passed through the present stage,  
ed there would be a full House on the third reading, and  
entlemen would exert themselves to oppose a bill fraught with  
ad consequences.

r, FOX said, he should concur in the motion for postponing  
ill. As to the time, perhaps, he might differ from the  
y magistrate who made the motion. With respect to the bill  
he had considered it from the very beginning to be a measure  
ther impracticable in the present state of the country. He did  
think that any clause could be introduced into the bill which  
d do away the objections to it, for the whole principle of the  
as radically unjust. He was exceedingly sorry, however, that  
d been prevented by indisposition from attending when the bill  
a the Committee, and examining the different clauses as they  
proposed, for he now professed himself incapable of under-  
ing them. Objections, however, to the whole bill were too  
us to pass unnoticed. Every species of commercial property  
by this bill be laid hold of and exposed by Government. He  
old formerly that this inconvenience might be avoided. His  
r was, "that is morally impossible," for the very idea of  
ng a man pay a profit to Government for his property *ad*  
m, must necessarily imply that the value of that property  
be ascertained. This must also necessarily make public the

value of all the bequests in the kingdom. It was not necessary him to dilate upon this subject. This ascertainment of the value of every thing hereafter to be bequeathed, must necessarily depend upon a balance between debts and credits. Now there might, there must be cases, in which this system would be attended with great injustice. It was said that as we cannot ascertain the value of a person's property, it shall be taken according to the price afterwards received. The House should consider the tendency of this system. There must be thus annually laid before Parliament the whole state of our commercial prosperity and adversity. A man may lose upon one branch and gain upon another; he might have a partner in the one case, and he might be concerned alone in the other, and he might bequeath a legacy to the partner who had sustained this loss; then there must be a deduction of six per cent. of such bequest. This, perhaps, was an injustice which was intended, but it was an evil that was inseparable from the nature of the bill, and therefore could not be avoided. Now would ask how it was possible for a man to give an account of the *valorem* of the profits of a trade complicated with a thousand circumstances? And how this account was to be made to Government without the whole of the circumstances of that trade being made known to the public? In short, made known to every man in the world who should chuse to inquire into them? With regard to the practicability of estimating the value of property under the bill; suppose, for instance, a certain capital be left between two persons, the interest of which only was to be enjoyed by one at a time. Suppose it should go to the uncle in the first instance, the brother in the second, the nephew in the third, until the whole capital be made absolutely in the sixth person in succession. How could the claim be made on the part of Government? If it were laid upon the capital in the first instance, it must reduce the value of the interest of the legacy to the first annuitant, while a calculation must be made of the lives of the other parties, which could never be precisely determined, on account of various accidents. In the case of any contingency happening to the second or third annuitant after the death of the first, if restitution be made to the third or fourth, what restitution could be made to the first annuitant? how was any restitution provided for? There were many other objections to the provisions of the bill. It was well observed by the worthy magistrate, that a great hardship would be cast upon children who had the misfortune to be of illegitimate birth. How was this to be managed? Was there to be a power to institute an inquiry into the legitimacy of the children? Was there to be

ry into the legality of the marriage of the father, or the grand-  
father. Had Government that power? If they had, what a scene  
of confusion and intolerable vexation would follow from the exercise  
of that power? If this bill be consented to, there would be other  
bills of the same kind brought forward, and no good argument  
could then be found to oppose them; for admitting the principle of  
this to be just, he could not see any good reason why it should not  
be extended, for what was this but a mere shift to levy a duty on  
species of bequeathed property? If this should succeed, he  
dare to say the mode would be deemed an eligible one. He  
took notice of property in the funds. There was indeed a  
very ancient Act of Parliament which recognized the practice of recurring  
debts as an object of taxation. But he did not think that just; for  
when we funded a debt we contracted with the holder of it, that  
holder could enjoy it without diminution by a tax while he lived, and  
he should bequeath it to his posterity. He thought, therefore,  
that there was a considerable objection to that measure, but there was a  
great deal more to this. He thought also there was a great deal of  
force in the objection of the worthy magistrate about not bringing  
forward the other bill with regard to the tax on landed property.  
He saw no good reason why they should be separated, but many  
thought they should be kept together, and chiefly that the House might  
see the real extent of the plan upon this subject, and by applying  
it to landed property, the impracticability of doing any thing like  
this in the execution of it would be more striking. He lamented,  
indeed, that the House was so indifferently attended; but that was  
not the thing which he had reason to lament upon subjects of greater  
importance, even than the present. He did not see any necessity of  
bringing this bill for four months, four weeks would be sufficient  
to give the House to make up its mind on the subject. But both the  
bills should be debated together, and the House ought not to pass  
either without knowing whether they could ever pass the other. He  
made many objections to the particular provisions of the bill, but they  
all seemed as nothing when compared to his objections to the general  
principle of the bill. The idea of an *ad valorem* estimate of tax-  
ation on a man's property was repugnant to sense and justice in any  
country, but particularly in such a State as ours, where it was im-  
possible to calculate the inconveniences to which it would give birth.  
He thought, for aught any man could say to the contrary, endanger  
the very existence of our commerce. Indeed, he wondered  
that the House, which had in it so many men well acquainted with  
the nature of commerce, felt so easy under a measure so alarming as  
this. Feeling so many objections as he did to this tax, and with-



ing the people to understand its nature better than he believed did at present, he should at all events vote for some delay in business. He, indeed, was confident that a sense of his duty to the public would command him to vote for the rejection of the bill altogether. He should now, however, only desire that the bill should be delayed until the other bill for taxing landed property should be laid before the House.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said, in reply to Mr. Grey, that there was not a necessary connection between the two bills, and that therefore there was no reason for postponing the one until the other was discussed. The principle of both was already recognized in the act imposing a duty on legacies of 20s. per cent. when the legacies is above 100l. and of 40s. per cent. when it exceeds 400l. It had been argued that the bill was impolitic, because it went to lay open the state of private property. Such investigations were sanctioned by the laws in Jamaica, and there had been productive of no bad effects. But upon the provisions of the present bill, there was no necessity for any such investigation taking place, because it would be always in the power of an executor to avoid it by proposing a composition. He defended the principle of taxation proposed in the bill, because it took nothing from the actual enjoyment of any person upon whom it operated. In subjecting persons to a vexatious inquiry, he saw no part of the objection that had that effect, and he was at a loss where the honourable gentleman could find such a clause. He owned that the clause relating to illegitimate children was somewhat hard, but it would be impossible to make an exception in their favour. Besides, it would be in the power of the father to make provision for the payment of the tax by making an additional allowance to his natural child. He concluded with justifying the tax, as merely an extended operation of principles that were already recognized, and which would operate lightly upon the country as any that could be proposed.

Mr. GREY acknowledged that he thought it difficult to introduce new taxes; and more especially at this time, when the people were so grievously oppressed, and all additional resources exhausted; but of all taxes, however objectionable in general, he knew of none more so than the present, though it appeared to him that the objections would come with greater force and precision upon the farther consideration of the present bill were postponed until another came before the House. In regard to what had passed in the present discussion, he observed, that the honourable and learned gentleman had stated it to be impossible to except illegitimate children. He thought so too, and he moreover thought that the

operate as a considerable hardship upon those persons who, not illegitimate themselves, derived their existence from an intimate source, as they would be strangers in blood, and be liable to incur the whole expence. Another of his objections to the bill was the same as that of his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) with regard to the discovery of private affairs. The honourable and learned gentleman had justified this part of the bill upon the example of Jamaica. Now whatever might be the policy of Jamaica, it has always been contended here, that to oblige any person to make discovery of his private concerns would be most fatal to the commercial credit of the country. In the earlier part of his speech, the honourable and learned gentleman concealed this effect of the bill by stating that it would not be necessary to make this discovery; but Mr. Grey thought it would be difficult for him to prove it against the provisions of the bill. To demonstrate this, he begged to consider in the first place how the duty was to be levied, and that it was to be levied under the superintendence of the Commissioners of Stamps by persons appointed by them, who were to transcribe an account of the property, which was afterwards to be registered and kept alphabetically in the books, so that Government might at any time resort to the books, and immediately see the amount of any person's property. Therefore, whether it might be politic in Jamaica or not, he thought it ought to be guarded against in this country. The next objection was against the manner in which the duty was to be levied. The honourable and learned gentleman said that it would be levied in the least oppressive manner, because it would not take from the actual enjoyments of any one. He differed from him in opinion, because in this country of commerce, where large capitals were embarked, the subtraction of the duty would be a material consideration. What, if two or three general successions were successively to take place in a short period, would not the subtraction of 6 per cent. or, at the lowest estimation, 2 or 2½ per cent. upon any capital, make a heavy imposition? Certainly it would, and therefore upon that principle he objected to the bill. There were some things which his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) had advanced, that he did not think had been satisfactorily answered. One of them was, that people would be subject to a vexatious sort of inquiry at repeated periods. The honourable and learned gentleman expressed himself surprised at this, and said he was unable to define what part of the bill his right honourable friend alluded to. It was in that part of the bill where the 8th page enacts that, if no specific legacy is left in any direction, but the profits from time to time in any concern,

that the duty shall then attach upon them. Mr. Grey said that he might not perfectly have understood the clause, but he thought of an instance of a share in a banking-house which his right honourable friend had alluded to, came precisely under the clause. If the bequest was to be paid out of the sum or sums of money arising as profits of the concern, he asked how it was to be applied but by a periodical inquiry into the state of the firm, or by what was tantamount to a voluntary declaration? His honourable friend had also objected to another part of the bill, upon which his objection had not been answered with any satisfaction. It was that part of it where persons equally in relationship to the testator, are not made equal in the discharge of duty. He objected also to that part of it where the property left as an annuity to different persons in succession; because it appeared to him that the duty upon all the legacies was to be levied at once, which, if taken for six lives from the capital, would reduce it so much as materially to affect the first annuitant. Another thing in regard to contingencies required explanation. If a person paid the whole tax at once from the capital upon the legacies of persons succeeding inheritors, he understood that although he had done so on the arrival of a contingency, restitution was to be made; yet it did not appear to him that any provision had been made for restitution, nor was it altogether just, since the demand would be made upon the first annuitant, whereby the capital would be diminished, and the contingency might not arrive till after his death. This was in his view of the subject, the most difficult part of the bill, though his general objection was to the publication of property, to which the whole of the bill tended. He did not wish to say any more upon the other bill at present, but he wished they could both come at the same time under consideration. The honourable learned gentleman said that they ought to be divided, because the provisions were different, though the principle was the same. He thought that if the principle was the same they ought to be discussed together. The fact was, that the other bill was neither more or less than a land tax, levied in a worse mode than the tax is usually levied, and at a time when the land is less able to bear it. He was of the same opinion as his right honourable friend too, that as there was no striking distinction of principle between the immediate heir, the next person, and that under sanction of this tax, a tax upon immediate succession would soon after take place, and he felt no objection to it. He had stated his objections, perhaps in a manner not suited to the occasion, and should vote for postponing the farther consideration, that he might judge better of it, when the other bill came to be discussed.



The ATTORNEY GENERAL was glad to hear the objections to the bill, as they afforded an opportunity for explanation, which would be serviceable to the subject in general, and to the executor and administrator in particular. If he had been asked for his advice before the framing of the present bill, he should have advised His Majesty's Ministers to follow up the acts of the 23d and 29th of His present Majesty, since it was necessary to know the duty of the one and the obligation of the other. The difficulty was to determine whether this bill was a parliamentary solution, or not, of those perplexities which had puzzled professional men for sixteen years back? and he thought it was. The first objection was, because there was no exception for illegitimate children. Such, he said, had always been the case with former acts of parliament, and he conceived it proper, both on the principles of morality and from the policy of legislation. This act, however, was lenient, in comparison with other acts of parliament; for if the testator stated his legatee to be his child, although illegitimate, he would enjoy the exception made in favour of the lincal descent, which was not the case as the laws now stood. If the testator died intestate, then indeed, as now, the claim of the illegitimate succession stood for nothing, and consequently the objection did not appear well founded. They who oppose the present bill, must repeal the whole of the laws as they now stand, if they did not admit the proposed regulation to be an improvement. He had often been put under the torture, by the inexplicability of former acts. If the executor asked the legatee for a receipt, on the payment of the legacy, the legatee might refuse, because he was to pay a tax, urging as a plea, that he who was to pay money, ought not to give a receipt. The executor might then say, that unless a receipt was given, he would refuse to pay the legacy, and the general consequence was, that on one side or the other an action ensued, upon which it was extremely difficult to decide. Now this was all adjusted by the present bill, which says, that a receipt shall be given by the legatee. The next question to be considered, as the laws now stand, was—What was a legacy? It had often been contended, that an annuity was not a legacy, that a residue was not a legacy, that a lease was not a legacy, or that a bequest, compounded of many things, was not a legacy. Yet, by former acts, a duty was levied upon the residue of the intestate's estates. Again, he observed, that as the laws now stood, there was hardly a possible case, in which, if any litigation happened, the books and private concerns of individuals might not be examined, and instanced the case of a bankrupt in particular. Another circumstance, as the laws now stood, was, that if the testator, dying testate,

left a residue of his estates to A. B. no man could say that it was a legacy, while, if he died intestate, the case was altered. And there were difficulties of other sorts. An indeterminable question at present was, whether an annuity was a legacy; He was of opinion that it was an annual legacy; and, as such, that receipts were to be required from year to year. Now the present bill settled it, and was moreover very lenient with respect to the legatee at the time; for it took a duty only for four years, and, if the legatee should die in that interim, a restitution was to be made of the duty on the remainder. In reply to the observations upon collateral inheritance as annuities, he remarked, that if a legacy, to be given to A. B. the remainder to B. and, after his decease, the legacy to be given absolutely to C. you must consider the trustees as legatees, and the duty attaches upon the capital. Therefore, all pay their due proportion, and all suffer in proportion to the diminution of the capital in their exact ratio, which is not the case as the laws now stand, for the receipt must be given in the most remote degree of relationship for all, and consequently every legatee endures a greater share. There were some cases of legacies, he admitted, which came under no description. Of this class was that left to any person for whom the testator had a regard, but left in the hands of a confidential trustee, to be optionally administered, according to the conduct of the legatee. Such sums would of course be supplied from time to time, and vary in their amount, and therefore the payment of the duty must attach upon the actual capital. It applied no more to the profits on a capital in trade; for there also it was laid upon the capital, and not upon the profits. Here then it was plain that the honourable gentleman (Mr. Grey) had mistaken the nature of the bill. But where the testator has no share in the capital, and leaves a legacy in a share of the profits, the duty must depend upon the good will of the legatee. He reviewed the several acts of Parliament relating to legacies, which were passed in 1780, 1783, and 1789, which he found very defective, yet every one of them admitted the inspection of private concerns; and supposing none of those acts had passed, he said, he should be glad to know how many cases there were, in which an individual was not liable to be compelled by law to make a full disclosure of the state of his affairs. It was true, and the sentiment had been acted upon judicially, that it was waved upon the principle of respect to the commercial interests of the country; but he knew of no instance of succession which might not be demanded, except where a single person takes the whole property of the testator. This bill, therefore, on the whole, seemed to provide for the ease and convenience of executors, by obviating

old inconveniencies : he was persuaded it would be acceptable to the country, and he thought that it had already received some money from the public, when he saw the manner in which it attended that night.

Mr. FRANCIS observed, that a single assertion, made by the learned gentleman, and his candid declaration, that the existing law, to which he adverted, created great embarrassments and disaffection of legal opinion, was a circumstance sufficient alone to urge the House to give a vote for the amendment. If it was true, as stated, that the existing laws originated from great legal authorities, what objection had the House that the present bill would not be as objectionable, and as productive of embarrassments, as those to which the learned gentleman had referred? Mr. Francis said, if he understood the right honourable member who spoke last, legacies to wives and children, in trust, were liable to be taxed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL explained, and said, that the honourable member must have mistaken his meaning, as such was not the case.

Mr. W. SMITH professed that there was one clause in the bill which struck him forcibly, as extremely objectionable. This was a clause respecting the disclosure of commercial property, a circumstance of such inconvenience, that, if well understood by the mercantile world, would occasion a very serious opposition to any such measure. The mercantile world were totally unaware of the clause; this was a substantial reason why time should be given that the matter might be sufficiently and seriously considered. The bill had come out of the Committee amended, on the 21st of March, and was only printed on the 24th; so far certainly, in a measure of so much consequence, there was something like precipitancy. He declared himself by no means an enemy to the general mode of taxation, with respect to this bill, and his opposition arose merely from the inconveniencies that must arise from the disclosure of commercial concerns. For instance, in case of a large commercial house becoming residuary legatee to a partner, was it to be levied on the effects, or was it to come into account? If the latter was the case, who could ascertain the length of time during which it might be necessary such accounts should stand open? Here the great difficulty arose; how was it possible for the Commissioners of Stamps to compel a disclosure of the effects, without having recourse to a payment of the debts, and to the persons with whom such house transacted business? Suppose the remaining partners were to set a value on the property themselves, would the Commissioners trust to their valuation, without making farther inquiry into the *residuum*?



He was convinced they would not. They would say it was incumbent on them to examine farther; and what would be the result? They would appoint an appraiser not only to value goods, but the book-debts; he is to have a right to examine the debts due, and to discover how far these debts were liable to be paid or not. Was not the consequence then obvious? Was not every house, with whom they kept an account, liable to the inspection of this appraiser? For instance, if they said a debt was not worth more than 15s. which he insisted was worth 20s. How could he ascertain the fact, could he not examine the books and the papers of the debtor? This was a grievous objection; for in the present instance, the Commissioners of Stamps, their appraiser, and the Commissioners of the Land-Tax, were all empowered to examine the state of every commercial concern, with which such houses were busined. If a legal power was given to the persons he had mentioned, to enter into the private affairs and examine the commercial concerns of any man, it was impossible to foresee where an unjustifiable abuse would terminate. This was an objection to the mind, of such serious weight and magnitude, as should induce the House to postpone the report for future consideration.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, that so much had been said on the subject, he should rest satisfied with the defence that had been made of the measure by his honourable and learned friends, and should only detain the House for a few minutes, in reply to the honourable gentleman who had spoken. There was only one single point to which he should previously advert. In the course of the debate the argument had been raised that if the House should agree to the tax on collateral successions they would establish the principle by which a tax might also be levied on direct succession. Now he would contend that the principle was entirely different. The present tax applied very fairly in those cases where the expectation was remote, or no legal claim existed. How little was this argument, that the principle of the present tax, if admitted, would attach also on direct succession, consistent with the idea thrown out by gentlemen on the other side, with respect to illegitimate children. They thought the case of illegitimate children distinct from that of strangers, that they stood in an intimate relation to the testator, and that it was extremely unreasonable that in the present bill they should come under the same taxation as strangers. Yet illegitimate children stood, in the estimation of the law, as absolute strangers, and, except an express provision was made for them, were not entitled to claim any share. Yet they who affected to complain of the hardship in this

affirmed, that in the present measure there was no distinction of principle from the case of the immediate succession of legitimate children. The honourable gentleman contended, as an inconvenience in the operation of the bill, that the disclosure of what related to property would be put entirely at the pleasure of the Commissioners of Stamps. No such inconvenience existed by any clause in the bill. In the case of residuary legacies, it must be the immediate act of the legatee to make application, in the first instance, for an investigation into the amount of the whole property, to which he became eventually entitled, for his own accommodation. It did not belong to the executors to take any such step.—The persons interested were only obliged to pay in the proportions of the tax to the revenue, as the property bequeathed to them became available. If they desired an inquiry for their own accommodation, it was unfair to complain of the hardships or inconveniences of the investigation, which must in consequence be instituted. The executors were not entitled to ask for any such inquiry; the Commissioners of Stamps were only empowered to concur in it, when it was demanded by the legatee. If, therefore, there was any hardship, it must be voluntary; nor was it likely that an inquiry would be demanded in those cases where the details of the property were complicated, and where the investigation would be attended with any inconvenience. He said, that the present bill was so far from introducing any new principle of inquiry, that, as the law now stood, the same principle existed in several cases which he enumerated. It had existed for a long series of years; and to those who were best acquainted with its operations he appealed, whether it was attended with any of those fatal consequences to commercial credit, which, it was stated, would result from the present measure. He concluded, that if sufficient consideration had not been given to the bill, at least ample opportunity had been allowed for the purpose. It had been twice committed, and, after the first commitment, printed with the amendments; the only instance in which a tax-bill had been printed: so that no fault, in this respect, could be imputed to those who had brought it forward.

The question being put, that the bill be read this day four months,

Ayes, 16; Noes, 46.

The original question was put and carried; the Report read and agreed to; and the bill ordered to be read a third time on Thursday next, if then engrossed.

*Wednesday, 23d March.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, "That the order for the reading of the Personal Succession tax bill to-morrow be read," which being done, he said, that as the bill would be engrossed by to-morrow, he would move for the order to be discharged, and renewed for Monday the 4th of April; which was accordingly agreed to.

*Thursday, 24th March.*

General SMITH gave notice, that on Monday the 4th of April he would move, "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to order that be laid before this House, an account of the proceedings of a court-martial on Colonel Cawthorne."

Mr. DENT moved the order of the day for a Committee of the whole House, on the petition from the county of Leicester, for a repeal of the tax on dogs.

He then said, he would move for the order being discharged, as there were many gentlemen now absent, who were desirous of being present at the discussion. He would, however, wish the petition to be taken into consideration on the first open day after the 25th days. Having had some conversation with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was happy to find, that his objections to the petition were, in a considerable degree, removed. Indeed, he believed that the opinion of its necessity was universal.

Ordered, that the House resolve itself into a Committee on Tuesday the 5th of April next.

Mr. WILBERFORCE moved, "that there be laid before this House an account of all the vessels cleared out of the port of London for the coast of Africa, since the year 1788, distinguishing the tonnage, and the number cleared out for each respective year, and the number entered inwards, during the same period."

Mr. DENT wished to know for what purpose the honourable gentleman made this motion.

Mr. WILBERFORCE replied, that the honourable gentleman would know in due time, when he should bring forward further propositions on this subject to the House. He also mentioned the unfeeling opposition which had been made to the Sierra Leone Company, and every other scheme for ameliorating the situation of the natives of that unhappy country.

After some conversation the motion was agreed to.

Mr. Wilberforce then made similar motions for the p

Bristol, Liverpool and Lancaster, which were all severally agreed to.  
The House adjourned.

*Monday, 4th April.*

Mr. FRANCIS called to the recollection of the House, a general notice he had given of his intention to bring forward, in consequence of the miscarriage of the abolition of the slave trade, a motion for the amelioration of the state of the negroes in the West-India islands. He wished now to make that notice specific, and if it did not interfere with the business of Monday next (Wet docks) he should fix upon that day.

Agreed to.

General SMITH moved that the order of the day for inquiring into the expenditure of the public money for the erection of barracks, and furnishing the same, be discharged, and a new order made for Friday next.—Ordered.

Mr. MAINWARING called the attention of the House to a subject of the utmost importance. He held in his hand, he said, a petition, signed by a very considerable number of persons, designating themselves, the retail cutting butchers of the city of London, Westminster, the Borough of Southwark, and places adjacent, who, at the commencement of the present scarcity, he believed, contributed not a little to enhance the price of provisions, but who now solicited the honourable House to be examined at the bar, or otherwise, as to them should seem meet, and thereby to prove, that the high price of butcher's meat was imputable to the jobbers, forestallers, and carcase-butchers. The petition, the honourable Member remarked, was of that grave and serious nature, which would justify him in moving, that it might be referred to a Select Committee, to inquire into the allegations contained in it, and to report their opinion thereon; but as gentlemen, viewing it in the same light as he did, would, no doubt, concur in wishing the prayer of it to be acceded to, he should now content himself with simply moving, that the petition be brought up and laid upon the table.

The petition was then brought up, read, and ordered to be laid upon the table.

General SMITH, in pursuance of notice given on a former day, moved, that an humble address be presented to His Majesty, humbly praying, that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to give directions, that a copy of the proceedings of a court-martial, lately held on John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. a Member of this House, be laid upon the table.

The motion was agreed to *nem. con.* and the address was ordered  
VOL. XLV.



to be presented to His Majesty, by such gentlemen as are Members of the Privy Council.

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 5th April.*

The order of the day for the third reading of a bill for imposing on His Majesty a tax on legacies, conveyed in collateral wills, being read, the bill was read a third time.

On the question being put, that this bill do pass,

Mr. Alderman NEWNHAM said, that it was difficult to add any new objections to those which had been already made against the bill. There was one circumstance, however, which he forgot to mention in the discussion on a former evening, that by the present bill the same property might be subjected to the payment of the tax two or three times; as when epidemical distempers prevail in any part of the country, or in the conveyance of provisions to the officers in the army. He was clearly of opinion, that the bill ought not to pass; if it did, this might be a very good country to live in, but it would be a very bad country to die in.

Mr. RASHLEIGH wished to have some explanation of a particular clause in the bill, which he did not fully understand.

General SMITH found it impossible to give his assent to the present bill, under any amendment, or to allow it to pass. He entered his protest against its principle, and all its provisions. He was convinced that forty years ago the country would have been strenuous in its resistance to it, that the Minister would have been compelled to relinquish it. He begged leave to remind the House that the Cyder Excise act was so offensive, because it employed persons acting under the commissioners of excise to enter houses, and disclose the secrets of families, that the House was afterwards obliged to repeal it; and he did not know how the commissioners of stamps should possess this authority any more than the commissioners of excise. When the principle was admitted, he saw no end to the extent of its operations. He had always been accustomed to consider private fortunes as sacred, beyond legislative control, but the present bill went to the effect of a sort of inquisition over the property of individuals, and, in the whole, he could not but call it a most detestable tax.

Mr. FOX did not mean to trouble the House with any observations, either upon the principle of the bill, or any of its provisions, though he was clearly of opinion, that if the principle was carried up to its full extent, it would put an end to that commerce and industry, which, impaired as it at present was, still enabled

port those burdens to which we were subjected. It had been said, that this bill was of a similar nature with another intended to be brought into Parliament, proposing a corresponding tax upon land. What he meant now to propose, was to postpone the third reading of this bill, till the propriety and practicability of the other was discussed—The principle of both was allowed to be the same: but the provisions of each, from their nature, must be different. Allowing the principle to be just, if the provisions of the other bill were found, upon discussion, to be impracticable, he asked, in what situation the House would be placed. They would have sanctioned a tax upon personal property, which, it was allowed, ought equally to attach upon real property; but, perhaps, the tax upon real property might be found to be impracticable, and then the present tax would incur the charge, at least, of being partial. Upon this ground he proposed, that the debate should be adjourned till this day fortnight.

Mr. Chancellor PITT could see no reason for adjourning the debate. He agreed with one of the honourable gentleman's principles, that if this bill passed, the tax ought also to extend to landed property. But though the other should prove to be impracticable, it by no means followed, that the present tax was not allowable; for this inference assumed what he would not grant, that personal and real property had always been held upon the same footing by the Legislature. The principle of the tax upon personal property had already been recognized by the Legislature for the last thirteen years, in the Act imposing a certain duty upon Legacies, which was passed in 1783. And the present bill was merely following that principle which had been formally recognized, that personal property is a fit subject for taxation.

Mr. GREY, in reply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, denied that the principle of the present bill had ever been sanctioned by the Legislature. No tax could be imposed, as had been ably shewn by writers upon political economy, and particularly by Dr. Adam Smith, who stood deservedly at their head, without violating some principle of Government. The principle of the present bill was particularly of that effect; for was there any political principle more obvious than this, that every tax upon the capital of a country, must prove highly injurious to the commercial interests of that country? The reason was easy to be found, because it tended to diminish the sum of productive labour, in order to produce an unproductive fund. The former Legacy Tax he acknowledged to be a departure, to a certain degree, from this principle. But though the Legislature, in this instance, had departed from

this principle, they had not acted contrary to it. The Legislature left untouched the great bulk of commercial property, and attached upon those legacies which might easily be separated from property, whereas the present tax directly applied to the capital of the country, and entirely violates a principle which the Legacy Tax, was only departed from to a certain degree. Grey shewed that the tax might be repeatedly levied upon the same property in a short time, and that upon equal property the tax would operate most unequally. He asserted also, that there was no security against the tax being extended from collateral to direct heirs, and upon these grounds he would vote for the amendment proposed by his right honourable friend.

The House then divided upon Mr. Fox's motion,  
Ayes 16—Noes 64—The bill was then passed.

The House resolved into a Committee to take into consideration the Leicester and Worcester petitions for a tax upon dogs. Hobart in the chair.

Mr. DENT rose pursuant to the notice which he had given to propose a tax upon dogs, and entreated the indulgence of the Committee, while he stated the grounds of his motion. The tax, he said, was not only much desired, but was becoming absolutely necessary. Perhaps this was the first instance in this country, in which the people not only asked, but demanded an addition to their burdens. He would have it to be understood that it was the chief intention of the well-wishers to the measure to promote the relief and benefit of the poor. And he was convinced, that if it was carried into effect, it would lessen the Rates, render provisions more cheap and plentiful, diminish the instances of the hydrophobia, and at the same time open a considerable source of revenue to the public. The diminution of the consumption of flour, oatmeal, and those broken victuals which come from the tables of the affluent, and which, at present, are consumed by dogs, in great quantities, might contribute, in the present period of scarcity, to alleviate the distresses of the poor. According to Lord Chief Justice Hales, and Sir James Stewart, an increase of population was always the effect of an abundance of provisions: and upon this principle, the application of a great quantity of food which is at present consumed by dogs, to the use of the poor, would tend to augment the population of the country.—The number of dogs had lately increased so much, that it was a very formidable matter of serious alarm: such, indeed, was the increase, that if the Bramins might be said to have had an hospital for dogs in England might, with full as much propriety, be called a

tal for dogs. As a ground-work of the tax, he would first endeavour to find out the number of dogs in the country, calculating by the number of the population. He supposed that the population of the country might amount to ten millions, and these might compose two millions of families. Allowing a dog to each family, the number of dogs would amount to two millions; but supposing them to be diminished one half in consequence of the tax, there would still remain one million of dogs in the kingdom. Upon these he would propose to levy a tax of 2s. 6d. a head, indiscriminately, except those which serve as guides to blind men, which would produce a revenue of 125,000l. Mr. Dent proceeded to state from documents in his possession, the ravages which were committed by dogs, the quantity of provisions consumed by them, and the increasing evil of the hydrophobia. He first mentioned a recent pamphlet by Dr. Barry, upon the Subject, which, he said, contained many pointed remarks, applicable to the present question, and many unanswerable arguments in favour of the proposed tax; next a number of letters, which he had received, to shew that such a tax was not only desirable but necessary on account of their destruction of cattle; and last their great consumption of provisions. From the second volume of the Philosophical Transactions of the Manchester Society, it appeared, that there were fifteen thousand sheep annually destroyed by dogs. He supposed the number to be much under-rated in this statement, and that it amounted nearer to fifty thousand. He had a letter, informing him, that in a forest in Devonshire, one dog had killed four hundred sheep, and his correspondent added, that two hundred men, with as many dogs, had gone in search of this destructive animal, but had not been able to find him. Another dog had been seen killing sheep, a complaint was entered against him to his master, who exculpated his dog: he was afterwards watched, and seen killing two sheep, which having done, he went and washed himself in a pond, so that there were no marks of blood upon him--the fact was told to his master, who agreed to hang him up for a few minutes by the hind legs, in order to put his guilt or innocence to the test, and from the quantity of blood which he vomited, he was declared guilty. He wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer to pay particular attention to these facts, as a certain dog had been found killing sheep in the neighbourhood of Holwood, in Kent, with the right honourable (he left the House to fill up the blank) upon the collar, and the dog was spared on account of his title. The instance of hydrophobia had lately increased to a shocking degree. He knew that in one week, in the course of last year, no fewer



than thirty-three persons, infected with that distemper, had applied to the Manchester Infirmary. So far he called on the unanimity of the House to adopt his motion, and he trusted that they would be the more inclined to do it when he informed them that allowing a penny per day for the food of one million of dogs amounted annually to 3,000,000*l.* which was 700,000*l.* more than all the rates for the aged poor of the country, and yet a dog he thought could be kept for less than a penny per day. In a letter from a gentleman at Kingston upon Thames, he learned that sheep's heads, sheep's hearts and plucks, &c. were bought as offal in that vicinity to feed dogs, although the poor were glad to purchase such provisions, and from his inquiries at twenty different markets he learned that in London people did the same. Now he was credibly informed that a sheep's head, with the heart and pluck, &c. would subsist a man and his wife, and a couple of children for two days. One gentleman he had heard of, who contracted with his mealman to supply his kennel with wheat flour, oats, and meal, at 800*l.* per annum. This might appear to be exaggerated, but he knew a gentleman who expended 400*l.* per annum on the same articles for his dogs. A pack of hounds could not be kept for less than 1000*l.* 1500*l.* or 2000*l.* per year, and it was an absolute fact, that after a long chase a gentleman rode into a country town with his fox-hounds clamouring with hunger, and every baker's shop in the town was ransacked for bread to satisfy them. Under all these circumstances, therefore, he hoped that the Resolutions which he meant to propose to the Committee would not be rejected. He then moved, that a tax of half a crown a head upon each dog should be imposed.

He said if this resolution passed he should afterwards move another tax upon unkennelled hounds, which often run amongst young corn, and moreover did a great deal of mischief in the night. He mentioned some instances from the Reports of the Board of Agriculture.

Colonel STANLEY seconded the motion. The question being put, That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a duty of two shillings and six-pence per annum be imposed on dogs of every description,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he did not think there was anything unreasonable or improper in laying some tax on dogs, and therefore he did not expect to hear much said against it. But the Committee, he had no doubt, would feel it necessary to draw a line of distinction in this case. They would feel for the owners of some dogs, particularly poor persons. It was clear that the

should not keep a great number of dogs; but he thought there were many indigent persons to whom dogs were useful, and to whose children and family they might afford some rational amusement. Such ought to be distinguished from the opulent; otherwise the tax would justly be deemed a harsh one. The tax itself he thought a just one. He thought also that the best mode of laying on the duty would be to charge it at a certain sum for each dog per annum on those who keep them, and he submitted to the Committee, whether there should not be a difference in the charge on those who pay assessed taxes and the poor cottager? He did not say that if dogs be taxed that any persons should be allowed to keep dogs without paying for them, but he wished to make a distinction between the man in easy circumstances and the poor man. That distinction he should propose thus: Three shillings per annum for each dog that shall be kept by a person who pays any assessed taxes, and only one shilling for each dog kept by all those who do not pay assessed taxes. He did not see why this tax would be considered as intirely a parochial tax. He saw no reason why it should not, like other taxes, be appropriated for the service of the State.—The shilling tax indeed might be well applied intirely to parochial purposes, because it was to be paid by those who are excused certain rates by the parish, and on that account more easily collected under a parochial regulation; but the remaining two-thirds of the duty he should propose to be brought forward for public purposes. These distinctions might all of them be canvassed when the bill should be brought before a Committee of the whole House; but he thought it seasonable to make them now, because the subject might thereby be better understood than if he had made no distinction until the bill came to be discussed in a Committee. He should therefore propose an amendment to the present resolution—That instead of a duty of 2s. 6d. there be a duty of 3s. on each dog; meaning afterwards to propose in a Committee on the bill, that all persons who do not pay assessed taxes shall be charged only the duty of one shilling for each dog.

Mr. BUXTON thought the proposed tax a good one, but considering it rather a regulation of police than any thing else, and that it was to prevent mischief from too great a number of dogs, much of which had been already felt, he could not assent to the distinction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He saw no reason why the dogs kept by the poor should be distinguished from others. If a poor man kept a dog, and received relief from the parish, the parish supported his dog as well as himself. He saw no good reason why a poor man should keep a dog, he saw many against it.—

Looking on this measure as a regulation of police, and a very one, he was ready to support it, but the Minister's distinction could not support.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, he was originally a friend to tax. He could not approve of that sort of humanity which the right honourable friend wished to extend to the poor. The tax was certainly not for the purpose of extracting money from the pockets; and it was certainly humane to make such regulations which would induce them to curtail their expences, by not keeping dogs for which they had no use. Besides, it would operate to their advantage, if the number of those animals was curtailed. He was of opinion, and had very satisfactory reasons to believe, that hydrophobia did not arise in the many instances stated, from the cause assigned by the honourable gentleman. There was scarcely an instance, where it occurred among the higher orders of the community; but if it did proceed in a few instances from the cause mentioned, he thought it humane to remove, as much as possible, the cause, and in so doing, it was extending humanity to the lower order of society.

Mr. LECHMERE said, he had long thought that a measure of this kind was wanted in this country. He trusted this would be of service to the public at large, and particularly to the poor at that time, who suffered extreme hardships on account of great scarcity of provisions. Not only meat, but other provisions also were consumed by these animals, some of which were entirely useless, there were others, which were not only useful, but necessary, and they should be taxed at the lowest rate possible, such, for instance, as belonged to the labouring man. But as to gentlemen who kept a pack of fox hounds, he thought they should be compelled to pay high for them in proportion of their number. He thought that terriers, pointers, setters, and all other dogs which were kept for pleasure should be subjected to the tax; but he was going to say that for which he should be execrated by some part of the fashionable world—that should not deter him; therefore he would say that of all the dogs in this country, those he wished to be taxed the highest, were ladies' lap-dogs; they eat the meat of a whole family in a day. It was a disgrace to see the manner in which they were treated: to see an athletic fellow six feet high in a gaudy livery with a couple of lap-dogs under his arms, following a lady through Hyde or St. James's Park for a whole morning, and attending her home with such worthless animals to be fed upon every luxury at the table. If, therefore, any measure should be brought forward to tax these animals highly above all other dogs, it should have support.



Sir GREGORY PAGE TURNER said, he originally proposed a tax on dogs, and was now consequently called upon to give the motion his decided affirmative. The people universally prayed for the tax, and instead of two shillings and sixpence a dog, he was of opinion that it should be a crown. He did not believe a single dog would be executed in consequence of the tax; and if the Committee thought there would, he was then of opinion, that they should be protected by a penalty on every person that should execute his faithful companion. In Oxfordshire, in private and public conversations, he had heard much of the mischiefs which were occasioned by dogs, and in one village heard of an instance where a man of gypsies was followed by a *posse Comitatus* amounting to the number of sixteen. When he was a boy, there was a person who employed a whipper-in, to whip the dogs out of the church, who had the impudence to bark at the parson, and interrupt divine worship. It was besides well known, that, in the administration of Lord North, a dog had intruded himself into the House, and barked at the noble Lord when opening the national budget: on enquiring what occasioned the disturbance, the answer given was, that it was a member for Barkshire.

Mr. DENT acquiesced in the amendment proposed by the Minister.

The resolution originally moved was then put and negatived.

The amendment, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a duty not exceeding 3s. per annum, shall be imposed on each dog, &c. was put and carried.

General SMITH moved, that there be laid before the House an account of all corn and flour imported into this kingdom in March last, entitled to receive bounties on importation, specifying the quantities and the names of the ports into which they were imported.

Ordered.

*Wednesday, 6th April.*

At four o'clock the Speaker counted the House, and there being only thirty-four members present, the House adjourned till to-morrow.

*Thursday, 7th April.*

Lord STOPFORD communicated His Majesty's answer to the address of the House, for copies of the proceedings in the case of Colonel Cawthorne, informing the House that he would give directions accordingly.

Mr. PYBUS, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, presented to the House the warrant for the arrest of Admiral Cornwallis in order to his being tried upon certain charges, but which has not yet been put in execution in consequence of Admiral Cornwallis's word of honour to attend.

*Friday, 8th April.*

Mr. GREY moved, that there be laid before the House an account of all the monies due to colonels and commanding officers in the militia and fencible regiments, with the date at which said monies became due.

An account of all the monies remaining due to colonels and commanding officers in the militia and fencible regiments on the 1st of January last, and which have been since paid, with an account of the grants from which these arrears have been discharged :

An account of all the monies due to officers in the regiments of the militia which remained due on the 1st of January last, and which have been since paid, together with an account of the grants from which said payments have been made :

An account of all the pay due to general and staff officers in the militia, with the dates at which this pay became due :

An account of all the arrears due to general and staff officers in the militia on the 1st of January last, and which have been since paid, with an account of the grants from which these arrears have been discharged :

An account of the pay due to governors and lieutenants serving in garrisons beyond seas, with the date at which this pay became due :

An account of all the arrears due to governors and lieutenants serving in garrisons beyond sea, remaining due on the 1st of January, and which have been since discharged :

An account of the Exchequer bills issued on the vote of 1796, with the expence of issuing them, distinguishing those issued for the payment of arrears due before the 1st of December 1795.

These motions being severally put and carried, all the resolutions were ordered to be produced.

Sir CHARLES MORGAN brought up a copy of the proceedings of the court-martial upon Colonel Cawthorne, which he laid upon the table.

General SMITH moved, that the articles of charge, with the opinion and sentence of the court contained in the proceedings should be printed. If any of Colonel Cawthorne's friends

that the whole should be printed, he had no objection ; though he conceived it would be attended with needless expence, and an improper waste of time.

Lord TYRCONNEL moved that the whole of the papers should be printed.

Mr. GREY was of opinion, that it would be improper for the House to found any measure respecting one of its members upon the opinion of a court-martial. If printing all the papers was necessary to the purposes of justice, it ought to be done. He was afraid, however, that they were so voluminous that printing them in a mass would tend to defeat any proceeding this session. He suggested, that a Committee might be appointed to examine the papers, and to report upon the evidence to the House.

Mr. FRANCIS opposed the printing of all the papers, because it could serve no good purpose, the friends of Colonel Cawthorne having it in their power to make themselves complete masters of the evidence from the manuscripts that had been now laid upon the table.

Mr. Chancellor PITT conceived, that it was but fair that all the papers should be printed ; and he did not see that there could be any reasonable objection made to the proposition. Neither did he think that the printing would take up so much time, as to render it impossible for the House to take some step in the business, in the course of this session.

General SMITH's motion was then put and negatived, and all the papers were ordered to be printed.

General SMITH said, that he would make no apology for bringing forward the motion which he was about to submit to the House this evening, as in his opinion it was inferior to none, not even to that lately proposed by his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) in importance. He meant in the first place to state the amount of the expediture, to compare it with the expence incurred by similar objects in past times, and then to point out the unconstitutional nature of the measure. The expence of erecting barracks was so enormous, it amounted to more than half the sum saved by Mr. Burke's bill. In the papers on the table, there was an account of money disbursed, considerably above a million sterling. An estimate had been given for erecting more, to the amount of 200,000*l.* and allowing 100,000*l.* for bedding and utensils not included in the estimate ; the expence was not all ; Ministers had obtained the means of considerable influence, by the patronage of the offices to which this system had given rise. There were forty-six barrack-

masters, a barrack master general, and nineteen officers with amounting in all to 11,000l. If there were barracks, there must be barrack-masters; but he asked, why barrack-masters were appointed, and enjoyed ample salaries before the barracks were built? At Lincoln this had actually been done before even the barracks were marked out. Why, he demanded, was the public money applied? Was this the way that our ancestors acted when they wanted money for the public service? Here the honourable member moved, the act should be read, by which it was enacted, "That no person should enjoy a salary of more than 5000l. without an estimate being previously given, and signed by the Chancellor of the Treasury." In former times, when any important measure was in contemplation, an inspecting officer was appointed, who delivered in a Report for parliamentary consideration. If in the present case Ministers had followed this practice, and submitted to the House an estimate of the expence of erecting barracks, he was convinced that it would have been thrown out, like the former estimate. But Ministers had first squandered the public money, and then they came craving the sanction of Parliament for what they had done. How could the House, as guardians of the public purse, permit such conduct to pass uncensured? His honourable friend (Mr. Grey) had lately given a representation of the financial state of the country, which certainly had never been confuted, and which he expected would have extorted some vindication of his conduct from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He did expect, that the Chancellor, who had been the chief promoter of that war, would have been anxious to alleviate, as much as possible, the expence of the war; that the Chancellor, who used so loudly to inveigh against the extravagance of another Minister in a former war, would have been eager to account to the nation for the enormous additional expence incurred during his administration in the present war. Economy he had often extolled as a virtue, where was the economy in expending 1,400,000l. in the erection of barracks? The expence, however, was a trifling object, compared with the unconstitutionality of the measure. "God forbid that every town should be made a citadel, and every village converted into a garrison? Barracks were already erected, containing thirty-four thousand troops, which was double the number of the usual peace establishment. From this fact one or two conclusions must follow, either that Ministers have betrayed the confidence of the nation, in needlessly squandering the public money, by erecting barracks, for which there was no use, or that they mean to maintain a standing army, sufficient to enable them (to borrow



their own expressions) to exercise a vigour beyond the law. But was there any thing in the present state of the country to warrant the adoption of such measures with such intentions? The people had lately met with a severe trial, and had borne it with patience and fortitude. If Ministers were to have the power of applying money to one purpose which was voted by Parliament for another, there was an end of the constitution. The constitution was much in the people's mouths: at the beginning of the war, in particular, the right honourable gentleman had insisted, that it was the salvation of the constitution which prompted him to undertake the war. He was one of those who was friendly to the war upon this principle, and he had not altered his opinion. But he wished that gentlemen would have some regard to consistency of character; and while they supported the constitution with one hand, that they would not attack it with the other. The Minister of this country had done more than ever the most despotic monarch dared to do. He had taken money out of the people's pockets without their consent; he had acted contrary to all precedent, abused the confidence of the nation, violated the forms of parliament, and acted in direct defiance of the principles of the constitution. He concluded with moving, That it be referred to a committee to inquire into the amount of the expenditure in erecting barracks, to investigate by what authority the public money has been thus applied, and to report the evidence, with their opinion, to the House."

The SECRETARY AT WAR, in reply to Gen. Smith, said, that the honourable general was struck in the first place with the magnitude of the expence. This proved but little; for in every country such as this, the public service must necessarily be carried on at a great expence. The question was, Whether the propriety of the object, and the manner of conducting the means of attaining that object, were such as to justify the expence? It had been urged also, as a serious objection to the measure, that the intention of carrying it into execution had not been submitted to parliament. No man was a greater friend than he was to a strict compliance with form, even when forms were trifling; but he begged that the House would distinguish between a deviation from form for the sake of convenience, and a similar deviation with an intention to mislead. The former was the case in the present instance. An estimate, for the erection of barracks, had never been formally submitted to parliament, but the subject had, in several stages, been brought forward for discussion, and the scheme had, in more than one instance, met the approving judgement of the House. When he called to the recollection of the House the discussion which took

place in the session of 1793, and the decision that they could not complain that the matter had passed that they had been unapprised of its execution. done in the business upon the spur of the occasion ; an estimate had been actually laid before the House served no other purpose than barely to satisfy form. the system was the next object of the honourable General's versions ; but he reminded him that the system was new. There were barracks in the kingdom but accommodating twenty thousand troops. To this that it would be said, if there were so many barracks was the necessity of adding to their number ; might be given. The old barracks were constructed for the accommodation of infantry ; whereas barracks were wanted : and another answer was, that the old all so improperly situated as to be of little or no purpose of barracks in the present state of the country. reason why the innkeepers should be burdened with of soldiers, more than attorneys or shopkeepers. there might be some justice in it, because the allowance nearly an equivalent to the expence to which they but, in the present state of things, there was neither nor common justice in continuing the burden. that the burden fell, not upon the innkeeper, but the innkeeper ; but this was a most false and irrational mode. For some time past the number of capital inns in the country had been considerably on the decrease, the consequence of that the grievance of quartering soldiers was daily intolerable upon those which remained, and loudly calling for relief. The only permanent mode which could be devised of erecting barracks. Having thus evinced the necessity of the measure, the expence could not, abstractedly, be considered as a serious objection. If, indeed, there had been a neglect of an improvident profusion ; if there has been any error in the contracts for ground or for building, or if expenses have been given to those who superintend that department there is cause of blame. He was ready to meet any amendment might be instituted, into the whole conduct, or any amendment in the business, confident that the more minutely the matter was brought into, the more credit would redound to those who were entrusted with its management. There was one error, if not a neglect of the honourable General, at least in the improvement was calculated to make, namely, that the erection

ited a permanent expence on the country. The salaries, to be  
re, would prove an annual burden; but he denied that the ex-  
pence of quartering soldiers would be so great in future, as it had  
been, since an additional allowance was granted to the innkeepers.  
And here he would say a word upon the peace establishment.—  
He did not mean to speculate upon the extent of this establishment  
at present: that would be a matter of consideration when peace ar-  
rived. He would only remark, that it was not necessary in time  
of peace, that all the barracks now erected should be full. But in  
peace we must look for a return of war; and he would ask, if it  
would be politic, at the commencement of another war, that the  
country should be in a similar situation to what it was when the  
present contest began, when buildings were obliged to be hastily  
raised, at a great expence, and in a manner much more superficial  
than if the plans had been maturely digested, and less suddenly  
executed? The addition to the number of barracks was chiefly  
on account of the cavalry and the situation of some of the coast-  
towns, particularly in the East of Scotland, which at present lay  
open to the depredations of any petty privateer. During the last  
peace the number of cavalry amounted to three thousand four hun-  
dred troops. It was intended that the barracks, now erected or  
erecting, should be sufficient for the accommodation of five thou-  
sand seven hundred, which only makes a surplus of seventeen hun-  
dred, which, in the present circumstances of the country, could not  
be reckoned too great an addition to our cavalry force. As to  
what was said respecting the patronage yielded by the barracks, it  
was necessarily attendant upon the institution, so that if the insti-  
tution was good, that was no argument at all. If it was said that  
the salaries were either more numerous or higher than they ought  
to be, he would meet the assertion with a direct negative. In fact,  
all the expence at present attendant on maintaining the barracks,  
is just what was incurred in a different shape in other departments  
of the War-Office, before they were erected. It had been stated,  
with some degree of triumph and exultation, that barrack-masters  
had been appointed before barracks were built. If such a mistake  
had ever taken place, it was corrected long before any mention was  
made of it in that House. He knew of three instances of the kind  
alluded to; but even these had not been appointed till an intention  
of erecting barracks was formed, and on the eve of execution,  
though, from certain circumstances, the resolution had been aban-  
doned. But why, it would be asked, perhaps, was the barrack-  
master appointed before the barracks were built? Why, but to  
select the ground, and to manage a great variety of business,



which must necessarily be transacted previous to their erection. In such instances the office has ceased, immediately upon the situation being changed; and as for what had been said of compensation having been granted to a certain individual for his appointment, he was entirely ignorant of the circumstance. The situation of the officers under the barrack-masters was so laborious, the attendance which it required so constant, and the pay so small, that they were resigning their places every day. He was, however, that the men, whom he had the good fortune to command, accept of these offices, were of a character that would be of great use to the service. From this detail Mr. Windham proceeded to take a constitutional view of the question. Was it unconstitutional, when it was notorious that certain men were labouring day and night to preach sedition, to prevent the soldiers from doing what the law would prohibit other people from preaching? In such a case government ought to follow the maxim of the French philosopher:—"If I cannot make him dumb, I will make you deaf." Ought a wise government to take less care of its army, than of its citizens, or than a father would take of his children? It was not desirable, either in a moral or political view, that the soldiers should live on the lower order of public houses? Not certainly; it was neither favourable to their private characters, nor to military discipline. The honourable General would make it plain that the erection of barracks is part of a system of slavery, which Ministers have planned, and of which they are bent upon the execution, and for this purpose he quoted an expression of his (Mr. Windham's) which he used on a former night, that, in certain circumstances, it would be necessary to have recourse to a *vigour beyond the law*. The expression he had certainly used; and when he recollected the situation in which he stood when he employed it, he would not shrink from the sentiment which it conveyed. It was on a memorable occasion that the sentiment fell from him, when it was affirmed that the duty of allegiance had ceased, and that resistance to government was no longer a question of duty, but of prudence. This struck him to be direct civil resistance, which seemed to threaten a dissolution of the government. It was in that situation that he said, that Government must exercise a *vigour beyond the law*; and in doing so, he said no more than what was conveyed in the maxim—*silent leges inter arma*. But while he was upon a topic of general speculation, he could not but advert to the expression of an absent gentleman, upon one of the stages of the bills; it was, "that he trusted the soldiers knew their duty, and that they were too well, to act against their fellow-subjects in the ex-

these acts." In his opinion, it was the duty of the army to hold the Government, and to act against their countrymen in cases of civil rebellion. Did not the soldiers act against their countrymen in the civil war in 1715? Did they not act against their countrymen in the rebellion of 1745? Did they not preserve the capital from the flames, by acting against a misguided mob in 1780? And did they not act against their countrymen in the Birmingham riots? It was as much their duty to act against domestic traitors as against a foreign enemy; and he was shocked when he heard a contrary sentiment uttered—a sentiment which should only be uttered in safety in that House; for he saw no reason why he who excites to treason should not be prosecuted as a traitor. Mr. Windham concluded with disapproving of the motion. Mr. M. A. TAYLOR observed, that what the right honourable gentleman had adduced, in consequence of the fate of the motion which he had brought forward on a former occasion, with respect to the erection of barracks, demanded from him but a few words. That he could not refrain from asserting that the deductions drawn from that transaction by the right honourable gentleman, as far as they meant them to bear on the motion of the honourable General, were perfectly nugatory in point of sense. He had produced a set of truisms, and created phantoms, which he himself destroyed; and he had advanced as a proposition, that if the people were in an actual state of rebellion, it was as much the duty of the military to proceed in arms against them to suppress it, as it was to prevent the ravages of a foreign enemy. Now no person ever doubted or denied this, and therefore, it was proper to remark, that this article was employed to divert the House from the object of his honourable friend's motion. The right honourable gentleman next asserted, that the principle of cantoning the military of this country in barracks, was not a new principle, for it had been recognized in Parliament. Where had the right honourable gentleman learned this doctrine, for he did not formerly profess it? He could tell the House where. He had learned it since he kept company with those men whose interest perverted every honest resolution, and every constitutional doctrine, and substituted in their place, a system of sophistry and delusion. He was sorry that the right honourable gentleman had been drawn into that fatal vortex, and he lived to lament his fall. There was a time, however, when he had heard him lay down opinions comfortable to the wise and salutary maxims of former times, opinions which almost flashed conviction upon every hearer. But he had now done that which even his right honourable friend had prudently avoided, for when he brought for-

ward a motion of similar tendency, three years ago, his right honourable friend did not presume to give it his decisive answer, but cautiously got rid of it by moving the order of the day. The right honourable gentleman had endeavoured to sanction the extensive system of erecting barracks, by saying that he had seen that the gentlemen had approved of the principle, when barracks were erected on the eastern coast of Scotland. But did the right honourable gentleman not recollect that Fort Augustus was erected for necessity, not principle, because there were no inns nor cantonments in the neighbourhood for soldiers to be quartered in, and because it was absolutely necessary to protect that coast from the depredations of hostile privateers. Yet this was not all, for he even asserted that Parliament had always recognized the principle. Now he desired him to shew him one instance of this parliamentary recognition. Was one question ever brought forward to the House that a change of times, of manners, and opinions, required a change of principles expedient? Was there one application to Parliament, one weak attempt to shew them that two evils, for undoubtedly the building of barracks was an evil, he would argue by and bye, they ought to chuse the least of two evils, not one, and he desired him to prove it, but contented himself with childish and sophistical arguments.

Now so far from Parliament having recognized the principle of building barracks, they were first clandestinely erected, and he believed, that as he was the only person in that House who had been in the neighbourhood near Sheffield, where they began to be so clandestinely erected, he was the first person who took any notice of the matter, and brought forward a discussion on the subject. When he inquired of the gentlemen at Sheffield about the mode in which they were to be paid for, whether the charges were to come into the estimates, he was informed that such was the expectation of those engaged in the transaction. Upon this information he examined the estimates and found an article for building barracks at Sheffield; but otherwise he believed that no person would have thought of looking into the estimates for such a charge. He believed also that the practice of building barracks had extended without the consent of Parliament, and that the sum expended for barrack-masters and other persons concerned in the transaction was enormous in proportion to the duty which they were called upon to perform. He next observed, that the right honourable gentleman had imagined that persons of a seditious and traitorous disposition were busied to seduce the army from their duty and allegiance. Now if such had really been the case, he supposed that they would easily be found out. If such seditious persons there were, wh



not brought forward? It had been stated, that papers of an inflammatory nature were thrown into the soldiers' quarters to corrupt them, and he begged to be informed whether papers of a similar nature might not also be thrown into barracks? If any seditious man did go into public houses to incite the soldiers to mutiny they were liable to heavy penalties; and surely the right honourable gentleman would not pretend to say that Government had not the power of punishing and punishing them? Where were their spies at this critical juncture? Though he supposed that Ministers had by this time been sufficiently convinced that spies were entitled to little or no credit, and were therefore cautious how they grounded an accusation upon their authority. Barracks, however, were to be their safeguard. What! then do soldiers never go out when they are cantoned in barracks? Are they always kept under lock and key? Always fastened to a chain and guided by their leaders? They never live with their families, never mingle with the world of citizens, and share alike the blessings and contagion of society? He hoped not so. Automaton troops of such discipline might, indeed, do for drill, but the best support of Government, and the best defenders of the rights, liberties, religion and property of the kingdom, are those men who have an interest in all, and partake of those blessings they afford. As he had formerly stated his objections upon the advantages and expediency of preserving the character of the citizen and the soldier inseparable, he declined going upon the same grounds now; but if the Minister ten or twenty years hence alluded to the noble Lord who unfortunately engaged in the American war, and for whose memory he entertained all due respect, (Lord North), if that noble Lord, at the commencement of that unhappy war had thought of introducing such a system, for a system of building barracks might be called, he would have been loudly censured by the whole nation; and if he had thought of introducing such a system at the close of that unhappy war, when he was attacked by the right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Fox) for his prodigality and weakness in the conduct of it, he was sure that the right honourable gentleman would have been one of the most strenuous opposers of such a measure. But time alters men's sentiments, and the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) was a melancholy instance of his change of sentiment. When he had seen others for denying the practice of building barracks to be justified by constitutional principles, did he recollect that he had formerly talked the same language? When he threw obloquy upon the arguments, did he think the influence of the Crown had diminished, and that to keep the constitutional balance in equilibrium,

it was expedient that it should be augmented? If such misconceptions, it was fit that he should be put right. he should be informed that the influence of Government had got too to an alarming degree, and was increased by his and that of his associates, by the number of places which he was obliged to be provided for them, among which he reckoned patronage of barracks. He desired to know whether none of these was preparatory to a general election? He believed it was impossible not to perceive the growth and extent of the influence and patronage. Advertisements of new offices dashed in his face, and the formation of the transport office of which he was followed up by the creation of the barrack office of which he was followed up. Where this would end God knows. Each day the expenses which the establishment of these new offices occasioned the load of barrack masters and dependents, became more and more oppressive to the people, and therefore, when gentlemen of sedition and disloyalty, they ought to prove their assertions. He desired them to give any proof, for all the proof that could be given was on his side of the question, and strongly evinced that they were more than ordinarily loyal and obedient, else they would not bear the burdens which a war, carried on in so scandalous and shameful, and so wanton a manner, had produced. He must be loyal indeed in the extreme, to submit to an expenditure of two millions of money for barracks, without the sanction and cognation of Parliament. The right honourable gentleman declared that there were no barrack masters appointed for whom he could not answer; that he was extremely happy that an annuity was offered to him to provide for men whose service he was to pay them to some remuneration from their country, and that those who were appointed were qualified for the appointment, and would discharge the trust and duty reposed in them with fidelity and integrity. He did not attempt to follow the right honourable gentleman out the whole of this high-flown panegyric, but he feared that some of these worthy men would be expected to shew their influence in a way not wholly connected with the business of that appointment, the management of barracks. He should like to know if this was true. He had read an account in a printed report of a speech of a right honourable friend (Mr. Grey) of the appointment of a barrack master at Lincoln, where no barracks were erected, and no compensation was afterwards made. He knew that Lincoln Members to Parliament, and he accordingly made some inquiries about this barrack master. He was informed that he was a good kind of man, a saddler by trade, a good sportsman, and

master, and master of the ceremonies to the Lincoln Assembly. Now he wished to be informed what sort of a connection there was between a dancing master and a barrack master, and of what service a fadler could be to a regiment where there were no horses. He had, however, he believed, obtained a true account of the real qualifications of this barrack master. He was a good electioneering man, and had formerly been a serviceable agent to a family of his acquaintance. That family had since fallen a little into decay, and as the dancing master shrewdly imagined, he should be better paid if he espoused the interests of the other party, he crossed hands, changed partners, and footed on the other side with Lord Hobart and Colonel Cawthorne. And this he believed was the true cause of his appointment. But why were barrack masters appointed before the barracks were erected? The right honourable gentleman said, that barrack masters served to point out the lines and measure the places. This was the first time that he had ever understood the business of a dancing master and surveyor, or a barrack master and an engineer, to be synonymous; and lest the country might suspect itself to be duped in this instance he should wish to have it explained. The right honourable gentleman moreover contended, that if the principle was not admitted, it had been found so expedient, so politic, and useful, that it ought to be so. Now, if it was so good that it ought to be recognized, why was not a regular motion made for that purpose? But allowing all this, what had it to do with the motion of his honourable friend? His motion regarded not the expediency, policy, nor utility of the barracks themselves, but related solely to the expenditure of the sums of money demanded for them, and the mode of that expenditure. Then, why was not this motion granted? The reason was plain. Ministers do not like inquiries, because unpleasant things are apt to come out which do not greatly redound to their honour. All inquiries were therefore unfortunate, while an Administration was taking every preparatory step to secure their success at elections and the retention of their places. He cautioned them, however, against the treatment of constitutional questions in such a way. They ought to be fairly met and openly discussed. Our ancestors were particularly careful to guard against the erection of inland fortresses and barracks, and if they were so jealous in such cases, he saw no reason why we should not be so too, unless the right honourable gentleman could prove the present period wiser than former times, and the present Administration wiser than every constitutional authority that formerly had existed. As it was, there had neither been an opposition nor administration in any former period that did not



reprobate the building of barracks as dangerous and unconstitutional. He therefore could not see on what grounds the House could to institute the inquiry.

Mr. FOX.—I am happy that the right honourable gentleman opposite to me, as being particularly connected with the department to which belongs the cognizance of that which is the subject of the evening's discussion, has thought proper to come forward in so clear and explicit a manner: I am, at the same time, proud to say that I differ with him upon almost all the points which he has advanced, and have no hesitation to declare in what that difference consists, though I do not intend to go at length into the consideration of all of them. He has, however, alluded to one general principle that particularly claims my attention; and in doing so, he has noticed an expression of mine made use of on a former occasion, and made use of when I advanced a general principle, which I have ever entertained, and ever will entertain, a principle which I have myself espoused, and which I believe to be espoused by almost all those with whom I have the honour of acting. I mean the general principle of resistance; the right inherent in freemen to resist arbitrary power, whatever shape it may assume, whether it be exercised by an Individual, by a Senate, or by a King and Parliament. This I proclaim as my opinion; in the support of this principle I will live and die. The discussion of this principle is not necessarily involved in the present question; I shall therefore content myself for the present, with thus again fairly stating it. The right honourable gentleman has also brought forward another general principle, more closely connected with the subject of debate, but the consideration of which at the same time not altogether necessary in its decision: I speak of the connection which ought to subsist between the military and the civil liberties of their countrymen. Upon this point I am indeed proud to differ with the right honourable gentleman. Because, says he, that bad men and bad principles abroad in the country, the military must be secluded from the society of their fellow-subjects. He most aptly introduces the language of the Mock Doctor, and says, "If I cannot make others dumb, I can make them deaf." He would place them entirely out of reach, where no such doctrine shall reach their ears. What is the full meaning and extent of this doctrine? Can the right honourable gentleman make his troops partially deaf? Can he prevent them from listening to the voice of sedition, and yet, at the same time, shutting them up from the knowledge of those general principles of rational liberty, whose animating influence, I say, ought to inspire the soldiers of a free country. He ought not, says he, to be taught disobedience—God forbid.



they should; but is it not a plain proposition that indiscriminate obedience is not the duty of an Englishman, whether he be a soldier or any other citizen? Where commands are illegal, it is his duty to resist them. The right honourable gentleman, surely, does not intend to say, that his troops should be altogether deaf— if he does, it will be in vain for him to look for an army in this country, possessed of this physical advantage: he must call in foreign mercenaries. Ignorant of any language but their own, they would be sufficiently deaf for all the purposes of despotism. It would be enough that they should understand their officers, and might easily be brought, as in former times has been attempted, to act against this House and the general liberties of the country. Exclusively of what I have already urged, I differ in this question upon the point of prudence and policy. If one system be more corrupt and inimical to freedom than another, it is the system of barracks. What was actually the case in France? Was not the mode in which their army was cantoned out in barracks a principal operative cause in producing the Revolution? It is beyond all belief astonishing, that while we declaim so violently upon the state to which France has been reduced, we are at the same time pursuing those very same measures which are likely to bring us every day nearer to a similar situation.

The honourable gentleman speaks of those who preach up doctrines hostile to the constitution; but permit me to say, it is not Mr. Paine, nor much more ingenious men than he, who by anything they say can injure the constitution. Those are its real enemies who are constantly making practical comments upon such authors. Those who, with me, admire our constitution, are of opinion, that the constitution, if strictly adhered to, has sufficient energy to defend and preserve itself. Paine says that our constitution is a mere farce, a mockery; that there is no real check upon the exercise of the powers of Government. Do not ministers practically say the same? Do they not, year after year, day after day, pass acts in direct violation of the acknowledged principles of the constitution? Their manifest breach of the Appropriation Act, as lately proved, must be fresh in our recollection. These deviations they pretend to justify on the plea of necessity. If this plea is at any time to be received with jealousy, it must be in the present instance; and indeed it is curious to observe the language by which this measure is attempted to be defended. In the mode of granting the money, says the right honourable gentleman, there may possibly have occurred some deviation from strict form, but nothing has been done substantially prejudicial.

What, is it from him such language was to be expected? him who has a sanctified horror at every thing which bears the semblance of Reform? From him who on the subject of Reform in the Representation, trembled at the bare idea of one step towards innovation? Is he the person who comes forward and tells us that forms may be dispensed with? But see what is actually the form, as it is called, which we are thus to dispense with? Are we not rather desired to dispense with a fundamental principle of the constitution? Are we not to dispense with the exercise of that control which we have over the public purse, and called upon to sanction disbursements which never obtained our consent? The Constitution says that money cannot be raised without the consent of Parliament. Has that not been done in the present instance? I ask, is it not, a principle to be advanced and supported in this case, that where considerable expence is to be incurred, leave to that purpose is to be obtained from Parliament, and not from the Executive Government? When the question of barracks was under the contemplation of Government, should it not have been solemnly brought before Parliament, undergone that grave consideration the importance of the subject demanded, and not laid before them for their approbation, after all the expence had been incurred? In the common affairs of life, if a servant to his master wanting 1000*l.* for any particular purpose, the master would naturally deliberate on the propriety and necessity of the proposed measure; but were his steward to inform him that he had actually expended a few thousand pounds in such and such a manner, the master, I presume, would be apt to startle at this behaviour without his previous consent; and were the steward to justify his conduct, by saying he considered that as a mere matter of course the master would no doubt give his servant to understand that such forms were not to be dispensed with. The steward might be induced to justify himself on the score of necessity. Cases of this kind certainly occur where such a plea might be admissible, but they must be cases neither of any great magnitude, nor where the purpose could be equally well effected in a different and more satisfactory manner. We are told that the magnitude of the expence is nothing, for that all state expences must be great; but I have always understood, that in proportion to the magnitude of the expence, is the propriety of instituting an inquiry. The expence in the present instance is unquestionably great, and how is it to be justified? We are told that the different circumstances attending it were unforeseen. This indeed, if any, is the

which can be made ; but mark the inconsistency, observe the creation of this excuse to the manner in which the subject had treated this evening. We are told that barracks were erected, expence incurred upon the spur of the occasion. This is the excuse ; but not satisfied with that, the right honourable gentleman, on the same breath, enters into an elaborate justification of the propriety of keeping them up as a permanent source of expence. He tells us that necessity produced all this of a sudden, and at the same time assures us that it has been long a matter of experience, that the military could not be properly accommodated in any other manner. The plan has avowedly been long in agitation, but Ministers have never thought proper, as they ought to have done, to bring it regularly before this House. They have, on the contrary, incurred all the expence, and gone on in the prosecution of this extensive system, not only without the authority, but in absolute defiance of Parliament. When I talk of erecting barracks on a large scale, the right honourable gentleman may perhaps not chuse to understand me. I remember a dispute I had with him upon the subject of nations. Those he treated with very little ceremony, and he seemed to be of a similar opinion with Citizen Genet, who thought that without any great loss, they might all be thrown into the sea. His system is to be defended, and defended in such a manner that we have heard to-night, we may dispose in the same manner of all the laws of England. We may, when we please, throw into the fire the Commentaries of Mr. Justice Blackstone, and the brilliant speeches on this subject delivered by the late Lord Chatham. We triumphantly told, that our ancestors gave their occasional consent to such a measure. What! can the honourable gentleman tell us there is any resemblance between small cantonments partially occupying place, and the whole army of this country being constantly separated from the rest of the inhabitants, and shut up in permanent barracks? I certainly do not ask much upon the present occasion, when I state as my opinion, that before we introduce innovations contrary to the avowed doctrines of Justice Blackstone and other constitutional writers, Parliament ought to be consulted, that it should have time for deliberation, and ought to have given its own decision. Great reliance has been placed upon the argument, that this subject was actually discussed in the debate upon a motion brought forward by my honourable friend who spoke last. That motion was for the purpose of passing a resolution, that such a system as was then entered into of erecting barracks, was contrary to the practice and example of our ancestors. What was then the answer by the House? They did not put a direct negative upon this.



but got rid of it by the Order of the Day. Can this be a solemn decision of Parliament, upon the principle of this? The most that can be said of it is, that they did not disapprove what was immediately doing; but that decision gave no sanction whatever to the unauthorized expenditure of public money. I very well recollect, that that debate, in which I took part, by no means turned upon the principle, but upon the wisdom of the motion. The right honourable gentleman has certainly longed to perceive the difference, and to allow that the denial of a particular proposition is not an universal affirmation of its opposite. How stands this question with the constitution? Its opposition is but a name, but a mockery of a constitution. How melancholy facts daily occur to justify the assertion! Large sums expended, without consulting Parliament, without bringing forward any estimate whatever; a thing surely not difficult to be obtained. An argument has, with propriety, been adduced in support of the Civil List. The King has it not in his power to make an arrangement in his parks or pleasure grounds, where a farm might be given to the amount of 500*l.* without an order passed by the Sign Manuel, and being approved by the Lords of the Treasury? I applaud this with reluctance, as I do any thing relating to the management of the Civil List. But I have not heard of an estimate on the subject of barracks being approved by the Lords of the Treasury; if there has, why has it not been brought before this House? The right honourable gentleman seems to make arguments of fact extremely cheap. He says, he understood the manner on this side of the House. I think he was longed with us to understand our sentiments too; and he ought to have said that when we talk of the increase of patronage, it is not a matter of declamation, but as an object of serious apprehension, a danger to the liberties of the country. He defends himself by saying, What! would you deprive the poor officer of this resource? I know not how many worthy objects may be supplied to fill such situations under Government, but I do venture, on good authority, that many are appointed for no real purpose but of forwarding ministerial elections. There is an ostensible and a secret purpose combined. It is, in the language of the right honourable gentleman himself, like a theatrical dress, where the lace and embroidery serves to conceal the dirt and dowdiness beneath. The right honourable gentleman tells us that no Barrack-master is appointed without an intention of erecting barracks. I hardly could suppose that they would be so absurd as to appoint Barrack-masters without any intention at all. He allows

that there were three instances where no duty whatever was  
 rmed. He has appealed to the honour of the gentleman at  
 head of that department, Barrack-master-general, for the pro-  
 v and economy of the manner in which the business is con-  
 d. Does he not recollect, that to pledge a man's honour is  
 the most honourable mode of accounting? and that to such  
 n it may be answered, I have no intention of disputing the  
 of honour, but I want to know what you have done with the  
 y. For these different reasons I exceedingly approve of ap-  
 ing a Committee of Inquiry; and if it still be resisted, I do  
 however liable I may make myself to invidious observations,  
 we have but a mockery of a Constitution. If Ministers dis-  
 d all fundamental principles, if this House calmly tolerate  
 excesses, if the power of raising and applying money be ex-  
 d not by the House of Commons, but the King's Ministers,  
 is our Constitution, but a farce and a mockery? We hear  
 orations upon the necessity of obedience and subjection to the  
 but if those at the head of the Government paid equal defe-  
 to the laws, with the other orders of the community, we  
 d have little reason to complain. Example would avail ten  
 s more than precept. It is strange that those who have the  
 constantly in their mouths, should, with equal perseverance be  
 g in direct opposition to it. My honourable friend who  
 before me, illustrated this subject by an allusion to what passed  
 the Fortification Act. The illustration was certainly in point.  
 his House had not entered into the examination of that system  
 ous to its being carried into execution, what would have been  
 onsequence? Would it have met with the fate which it expec-  
 ed? By no means. Had the expence been first incurred, and  
 lan brought forward afterwards, this House, I believe, would  
 acceded to the measure. I am not, indeed, so sanguine as to  
 ine, that the barrack system would, in these degenerate days,  
 been resisted, even if it had been brought forward in a way  
 ly regular. But at all events, Ministers would have acted  
 openly and avowedly in the business: and if it had been car-  
 it would have been, as it ought, an act of Legislature, and  
 merely of the Executive Government. The only tools which  
 fters seem not to think dangerous are edge-tools; they play  
 them with all the complacency imaginable. I repeat, that  
 maintaining of a standing army in this country, and dissolving  
 connection between the soldier and the citizen, is a subject of  
 ighest delicacy, of the greatest intricacy, and is not thus wan-  
 to be sported with by Ministers, without condescending to

consult the wisdom of Parliament? We seem to have there all that constitutional jealousy which ought ever to be a free country. We have sacrificed it to a false alarm.—The great power and influence of the Crown in this country has been pregnant with danger to its liberties. In better times the opinion was that it ought to be curtailed; and, in the present day, is there no ground for a continued and watchful jealousy? On the contrary, the more power we give, there is the more cause for jealousy.—Such was always the opinion of our forefathers; such ought to be our opinion, and before Ministers dare, on the present instance, upon a plea of necessity, to trample upon the rights of Englishmen, it would have been but decent, even in the worst case, to have given this House an opportunity of exercising its liberative functions, before a measure was carried into effect which was hostile to the general freedom and happiness of the nation.

Mr. Chancellor PITT confessed that he would rather follow the declaration of the honourable gentleman at the outset of his speech than his example at the conclusion. It was his duty to narrow the question as much as possible, but he could not do so. He said a few remarks in answer to some observations made on the subject by his right honourable friend. On the ground of expediency he argued that there was no sufficient reason stated for a Committee of Inquiry; but before he entered on this topic, he must beg leave to say, in vindication of the Secretary at War, that he had called on for a declaration, on what had fallen from the Secretary in the former debate, which in a general point of view could be no objection to construction, than that which he had, with so much magnanimity and justice, stated in his defence. He had now done away the presentation put on his words beyond the reach of all future comment. On the question of barracks, he was now at issue with the right honourable gentleman who spoke last. As to the objection that soldiers were cut off from all sedition, it followed that they should be deprived of all social intercourse with the civilly not. They still maintained all the relations of civil life, they enjoyed the society of their friends, and still had a general interest in the interests and prosperity of their country. The objections of his honourable friend were correct, and his answer was unanswerable, for while soldiers remained in public quarters they became dangerous each way, being liable to become worse and worse subjects. To say that the regulation of the military establishments was unconstitutional he thought pushing the argument to the extreme, since by the uniform practice of Government the express letter of the mutiny law, a distinction between



other parts of the community was recognized and established. Without contending whether the erection of barracks was right or not, he insisted that barracks had been erected with the approbation of Parliament although that approbation had not been previously obtained, [a cry of hear! hear!] nor so regularly as he and his right honourable friend had wished, yet it certainly was obtained to a considerable extent. In fact they had only been carrying on to a greater extent a principle which was established at early periods. The right honourable gentleman said that the principle was not approved by Parliament because the motion of his honourable friend three years ago did not receive a direct negative. Now the reasons why it did not were evident. First, some words of the motion were objected to, because they amounted to a total condemnation of the principle; secondly, others were not founded upon fact, because they asserted that our ancestors had never recognized the principle, when the contrary was the fact; and lastly, others were founded upon such authorities as could not be disputed, and therefore the only way to get rid of it was by moving the order of the day. If the principle had been wholly repugnant to Parliament, the country, and the constitution, would they not have taken steps to resist its operation? And consequently as they did not, their conduct was to be construed into a tacit and implied approbation. That was not all. From time to time the expence has been submitted to Parliament, and Parliament had approved the mode of supplying the money. They did not then go on secretly and surreptitiously, but produced their accounts from year to year; and yet, at the end of four years, Parliament were advised to turn round, as if they knew nothing of it before, and require a general reproduction of the statements on which they had formerly acted. His right honourable friend had defended the mode of bringing the accounts before Parliament, after the expences had been incurred, because an estimate had been made, the expences could not have accurately been foreseen, while the right honourable gentleman contended, that if the estimates had been previously produced it was probable that the whole plan would have been rejected. Here they were at issue on the question, and he agreed in the declaration of his right honourable friend, that if the whole were to be done over again, the expediency, the policy and the benefit of the measure were such as must induce the House to retain the opinion they had already expressed. If in the quantum there had been any improvident charge or expenditure, then there might have been sufficient ground for censure; but as it was, there could be no need of inquiry to know whether the charges were defrayed out of the extraordinaries, or



out of previous estimates.—There was no attempt to p  
 expence improvident ; and if there had, he trusted it w  
 been contradicted by the uniform practice of Government,  
 sanction of Parliament. He had said that Parliament had  
 the principle, and that it was not a new one. But the right  
 able gentleman opposite, in his usual way, contended that  
 racks erected in former times, were exceptions to the gene  
 ciple, while the honourable gentleman who preceded him  
 to entertain a similar opinion of the few in Scotland. Y  
 right-honourable friend had stated, if all those barracks had  
 repair at one time, they would have contained 20,000 tro  
 upon that statement alone he rested his defence, that it w  
 deviation from the general principle. Such was the cas  
 part of the question—the other was that which went t  
 whether there was any ground of abuse to justify the mot  
 since there appeared to be none, he should give it his dec  
 tive.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH supported the motion. He  
 tended, in opposition to the Chancellor of the Exchequer,  
 system of erecting barracks was entirely new, and not re  
 by any principle of the British Constitution, and objected  
 all occasions by the best authorities. He observed whatever  
 there might be for it, that this system had been put into e  
 to the greatest extent on the other side of the Tweed. If  
 honourable Secretary's argument held good, that this was th  
 est way of quartering troops, why did he not submit th  
 House at the outset of the business? One of the best exc  
 indeed one that had occasioned this system to be borne  
 patience it had been, was the relief given to inn-keep  
 allowing, as he did, the great burden and inconvenience  
 they felt by quartering soldiers, might not compensation b  
 made to them ; and if but a part of the enormous expenc  
 racks had been applied as an increase to the daily pay of  
 it would have afforded means of a much more constituti  
 essential relief to the innkeepers than the erection of  
 It was said, that the expence was chiefly incurred in barr  
 the cavalry ; and it appeared that about a million of me  
 been expended in the accommodation of only 5000  
 The right honourable Secretary had said, that our method of  
 ing soldiers hitherto was different from the conduct of  
 countries ; he hoped in God it always would be so ; our  
 tion was different from that of most other countries ; and  
 that the constitutional mode of quartering soldiers, adop

proved by the wisdom and experience of our ancestors in this limited monarchy, would not be abandoned for the system of barracks, fit only for the most absolute and despotic governments.

Mr. COURTENAY said, he could not give a silent vote on a question, without injustice to his right honourable friend (Secretary at War), who had not been treated with all that candour and candour to which he thought his right honourable friend entitled. From an uncommon species of ingenuous modesty (not always to be found in a Minister) his right honourable friend had concealed from the House a most extraordinary and ample fund, to supply in a great measure the enormous expence of erecting barracks in every part of the kingdom. He had been accidentally informed that by a new and most judicious order just issued from the War Office, that all the dung of the dragoon horses, which from time immemorial had obtained a douceur, and perquisite of the soldiers, was now to be sold, and the produce remitted to the War Office, to be lodged in the Majesty's Exchequer, and applied to the service of the State. Mr. Courtenay said, that he entertained the highest respect and admiration of the present Administration; he must own he had doubts whether in their present arduous and critical situation, they had condescended to contract their comprehensive and elevated views to such a minute object of economy; but such was the nature and character of true and elevated genius—nothing could be too great and capacious—nothing could be too minute or microscopic for its investigation. Here was a new and unexpected resource discovered—to support public credit, supply the Treasury, and to give to all Europe that our ways and means were inexhaustible, and was extracted from the very dung of our cavalry; and the unprecedented economy of his right honourable friend, by the erection and extension of the new system of barracks, supported the finances of the country. The orders expressly issued from the War Office were, that whoever, by a fair competition, offered the most advantageous terms for a whole year's dung, should have preference. From the character of his honourable friend, every competitor might give in his propositions with the utmost confidence, well assured that no disingenuous proceedings, and no partiality, even from a freeman of Norwich, would preclude any person from the fair and just profits which might result from public-spirited and honest competition. But this was not all; the Board of Agriculture had taken the matter into their serious consideration, and from the wisdom and patriotic principles which actuated them and their Secretaries, could our expectations be too sanguine. Perhaps if they would do it with due decorum, this happy regulation might be ex-

tended to the infantry ; if so, a standing army in time would be of the greatest utility, the waste lands improved, cultivation carried to the utmost perfection, by the erection of barracks. The ingenuity of the Secretary of that Board indeed insured success ; he, like Virgil, (as Mr. Addison had observed) could scatter his dung with an air of majesty. The royal domains principally derived their rich and flourishing from the manure he had bestowed on them. Mr. Court said, that he really was dubious of the information he had received relative to the new, grand, and astonishing regulation, till he saw the information sanctioned by the authority of his right honourable friends. The laudable and minute attention paid by the Ministers to the form and essence of the constitution, was exemplified in this point. It had been usual, during the assizes, to remove the troops, lest even the appearance of the military should excite any jealousy, so tenacious were our ancestors of their civil rights. Since the new barrack system, as that is a measure become necessary, what was the expedient ? Why the soldiers were sent to the barracks during that period ; but as the same discipline could not be so well extended to the officers, they were allowed to go into the town in coloured clothes ; in this disguise they were permitted to walk about. The privates were by this means kept from frequenting the courts of law, and from hearing any discourse which might relax their morals, and instil notions inconsistent with the implicit obedience with which it was their duty to submit themselves on all occasions. On another part, Mr. Court asserted, that his right honourable friend had been misrepresented in his expressions perverted. He had said that the soldiers, shut up in barracks, were secluded from hearing the seducing and boasting orations and arguments which had been held to them, and thereby their morals and principles preserved pure and untamined. All this was strictly true, according to the explanation he should give. He was too well acquainted with the former sentiments of his honourable friend, with his enthusiastic attachment to constitutional revolutionary doctrines, to mistake his meaning. He knew that Mr. Reeves and his association had ramified in committees and sub-committees, and inferior clubs over the whole country. His honourable friend knew too well, that they anxiously strove to uncitizen the soldier, to make him despise all rights and privileges of an Englishman, and only to look up to the king and his superior officers ; to forget that he was paid by the nation, and to imbibe those mean degrading doctrines which those men had so industriously circulated, namely, that the House



were a corrupt and unnecessary branch of the Legislature, and  
 ly an injurious check on the gracious and beneficent prerogatives  
 e Crown, and that our happiness would be promoted by losing  
 berties. His right honourable friend therefore rejoiced that the  
 rs were crammed in barracks, and cut off from the society of  
 arson,—the exciseman, and the members of Mr. Reeves's club.  
 e at the same time were conclusive answers to some gentlemen,  
 did not enter into the philosophic abstraction of his right honour-  
 friend's logic. The late Lord Chatham, Blackstone, Montesquieu,  
 all coincided in sentiment, that separating the foldier from the  
 y of the citizen, might be attended with the most dangerous  
 quences in a free country. Why?—Because the spirit and  
 cter of the military would soon preponderate; they would con-  
 themselves as a distinct and separate part of the community,  
 er actuated by the same interests, wishes, nor generous senti-  
 s to the people. But his right honourable friend had acted on  
 erent motive; a motive, which those enlightened statesmen,  
 rs, and philosophers, must have approved—He had separated  
 oldier from the general mass of the people, by whom they might  
 be corrupted and perverted; in the barracks, the true, free,  
 liberal principles of the constitution might be instilled into  
 ; and by this means they would become the guardians of our  
 s and liberties, and a patriot and foldier would be in future  
 imious terms. Mr. Courtenay said, he had but a single ob-  
 tion more to make. His right honourable friend had warmly and  
 ously expatiated on the heartfelt pleasure he, in common with  
 rest of His Majesty's ministers, enjoyed, in having an oppor-  
 y of relieving the half-pay list, by the appointment of merito-  
 officers to the employment of barrack-masters. They had six  
 fifty places to bestow; and, Mr. Courtenay said, he was per-  
 persuaded, that fifty, at least, gallant and veteran officers had  
 provided for by this noble arrangement, without any regard  
 ection jobs or any improper influence. He would therefore  
 e for a new list of such barrack-masters—that the country might  
 another proof of the virtue, patriotism, and generosity of His  
 esty's administration!

Mr. GREY said, he had no inclination to enter into the ge-  
 argument, but rose in consequence of a statement of his own  
 former night, which had been alluded to and contradicted.  
 as when he stated the sum expended on the erection of barracks  
 ounted to 1,100,000*l*. The right honourable Paymaster of  
 forces had said, it did not exceed 900,000*l*. He now, upon  
 er examination, found it to be 1,026,000*l*. which was clearly

proved from the papers on the table, and which sum had been expended without the consent or knowledge of Parliament. A question which, from its nature and magnitude, called for a full inquiry. As to what the right honourable Secretary had said on the subject of patronage, he thanked him, as he did not wish to restate precisely what he had said before ; and whether it was loosely or no, one fact was admitted, that a person had been appointed barrack-master for two years, at a place where barracks were now to be erected ; and being an useful man at election time, he was now, by way of compensation, appointed to a more important place, which he might be equally well qualified to fill. This did not mean now to argue the question of the propriety of the system of erecting barracks ; he agreed with the right honourable gentleman, that the question before the House was much more than whether or no, and as that gentleman had himself acknowledged the impropriety, at least, of incurring so much expence without the consent of Parliament, he hoped his future conduct would be influenced by what he had stated to be his present opinion. He contended that the censure of the House was not to be implied from the motion upon the motion of another honourable friend of his, for he was upon the contrary thought that if the House had really considered the extent of this system, they never could have consented to it. They had only one or two questions to put : What must we do to have permanent barracks on a peace establishment ? If the barracks were to hold 34,000 troops, and the old accommodation was 20,000, this would be 54,000 men on a peace establishment. That, he trusted, no minister would dare to propose in a peace establishment. It had been said that the barracks might be filled with troops in time of war, then could they make out that this was the cheapest way of maintaining men, by keeping up barracks for many more years than they wanted ? The principal question, to which he called for an answer, was respecting the expence incurred for temporary barracks. There were two accounts, one of 243,000*l.* the other of 1,000,000*l.* it was necessary to know whether these were distinct questions, or whether the lesser was included in the greater ; whether the expence was expended during the last five years, or all expended since the year 1793. If previous to last year, Ministers knew the whole of the expence they gave in the first account ; they ought not to have been so deficient. But through the whole of this business, as on many other occasions, he accused Ministers of setting the privileges of the House and the principles of the constitution, at defiance. In the view to get an answer to this last question that he had

when the papers he had moved for were produced, he would enter into the subject.

STEELE said, as the honourable gentlemen had alluded to the former debate, he must be excused for doing the same. He repeated the statement he had given in his former speech, contending for the correctness of the accounts, and the wish that Ministers should give every possible information. He differed widely from the honourable gentleman's ideas, that so large a peace establishment as 50 or even 40,000 troops were to be kept up; that was not so, nor were there barracks yet for more than 15,000, when the intended plan was complete, they would not exceed 10,000. He said, that former Ministers had been obliged to employ a part of the public money in a different manner from that in which it was disposed of by the Appropriation Act; during the whole of the American war this was particularly the case. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer, therefore, had followed the example of his predecessors.

GREY wished the right honourable gentleman much joy in his office;—that he who came into office to reform abuses and extravagance, should be justified by bad precedents, by precedents which he himself had so loudly condemned, was indeed extraordinary; but it was such a justification as needed no reply. Mr. Grey was explained respecting the barrack accounts.

STEELE again defended those accounts, censured Mr. Grey for his suspicions of their fairness, and assured him he had found out nothing improper in them, notwithstanding all his objections.

GREY said, his suspicions were such as became a member of Parliament, whose duty it is to watch, with a jealous eye, the disbursement of the public money. He did not plume himself on his activity; but, after seeing such erroneous accounts as had lately been presented to that House, he must take shame to himself that he had not been more active in detecting them.

SHERIDAN, Mr. FOX, and Mr. GREY contended, from the title of the two accounts, there was on the face of each a palpable inconsistency, that some explanation was absolutely necessary. In the account upon the table, 312,000*l.* is to be paid to the Barrack-master General, and expended in the erection of temporary barracks, upon a warrant dated 13th March 1795; while the account given in by Ministers last year, the title of which was—"An Account of Money issued to the Barrack-master General for Sums expended and due for the Erection of temporary Barracks, up to the 31st of December, 1795,"

amounted only to 243,000*l.* a difference of 70,000*l.* whether be in the hands of the Barrack-master General, or be otherwise accounted for.

Mr. Chancellor PITT and Mr. STEELE contended accounts were right; and, although the warrants bore a date, it did not follow that the money was all issued and that they believed almost if not the whole of 374,000*l.* expended in 1795.

The House divided—Ayes, 24; Noes, 98. Major

*Monday, April 11.*

Mr. ABBOT gave notice, that he should take an opportunity of moving for a committee to inquire into the expenses and report their opinion upon them to the House.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that he should move, to-morrow, to read certain papers concerning this subject, which, as they were granted in the Lords, would not, he presumed, be refused. This, however, would induce him to postpone the motion he had given notice, for a few days.

Mr. Chancellor PITT gave notice, that on this day he would move for a committee of ways and means, he would move for a further extension of the tax upon printed calicoes, which he had been obliged to withdraw. He would take that opportunity also of providing for unforeseen occurrences, of proposing certain measures for the payment of part of the unfunded debt, and of submitting to the consideration of the House a plan for remedying the grievance to which the commerce is subjected by the present scarcity of money.

Mr. GREY moved, that there be laid upon the table a statement of the arrears of the land-tax, standing out at Lady-day 1795, the names of the receivers, and the measures which should be adopted to enforce payment of these arrears.

The account was ordered to be produced.

Mr. FRANCIS rose, pursuant to the notice he had given a fortnight ago, for leave to bring in a bill to improve the condition of negroes and other slaves in the British colonies. He began with stating the importance of the subject as a claim upon the attention of the House, and the paucity of his talents as a reason for their indulgence. The more the subject was considered, its importance would appear; and the strength of his case would be convinced, superseded the necessity of great ability in its management. No man was more apt to tire the House with a dull, tedious harangue, but he would endeavour as little as possible to tire their patience. If, however, his talents proved unequal to the



he had undertaken, he demanded that indulgence which the magnitude of his cause had a right to expect. He distrusted his own powers, but he confided in the merit of what he was about to state. He acknowledged himself extremely liable to be interrupted by clamours and gesticulations; he should therefore, in the course of his speech, keep his eye fixed upon the Speaker, to guard as much as possible against the effects of such interruptions. He begged that the House would not conclude before he did, or that they would not draw hasty inferences from any part of his speech, but that they would compare all its parts together, impartially tracing its consistencies and its bearings. He was sorry to see that one honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) who had taken an active part in the business, was prevented by illness from attending in his place on the present occasion, as he expected considerable support and assistance from him this evening. But why did he mention one individual? He expected that support from every man in the House, if gentlemen in their former professions were candid and sincere. For whatever might be their opinion of past proceedings, what he was now about to propose, corresponded with those professions which they had uniformly held forth. He knew that some persons had said (and he begged that the answer to such an objection might not be considered in the light of an apology for his cause, for it required no defence against such attacks) that the matter was quiet, and that here it ought to rest. No, said Mr. Francis, it is not at rest, ought not to rest, and it never shall rest, though my feeble voice alone should be heard sounding the alarm. The cause can never die; and even though it were dead, yet it shall live. A venerable person once said, when the subject was under discussion, that we live in peace and happiness in this country, and that it was idle to trouble ourselves about the situation of any description of people. But it was not the authority of him who delivered this sentiment, that would ever deter him (Mr. Francis) from espousing the cause of an oppressed and highly-injured race of men, and for the rectitude of his conduct, he appealed to the just and manly feelings of the House. He hoped that their late resolution would appear not to bar any future proceeding. He had another resolution, passed in 1792, in favour of the abolition upon his side, so that he could appeal to the House against itself. He was sorry to have marked, in their proceedings, so much inconsistency of character, and he did not wish to speak of their votes in a disrespectful way, but he could predict the verdict which would be passed upon them by the pen of the future historian. There was one right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) whose support on the present occasion, perhaps, he might be

390  
expected to court; and if his cause would have permitted solicitation, in spite of any enmity, which, however unprovoked, might subsist between them, he would not have scrupled to invoke his aid; but he had other resources to these alone he was permitted to apply. As to that honourable gentleman, he meant to provoke, but not to offend; to irritate, but not to insult him. Nor would he, on the present occasion, address himself to his political integrity (of that he would give him credit for as much as he pleased to claim) but to his political discernment; he would ask him, if he was completely satisfied with the honours and emoluments of office; or if he looked still higher,—if he did not regard his future fame, and to the approbation of a succeeding age? By his conduct his considerations seemed for a moment to have escaped his notice. With the aid of seventy voices, to which he was usually indebted for the votes of that House, he was not able to muster above seven members on the side of the question which he espoused! If he looked to virtue, he might at least have looked to fame. His hesitation in declaring what was the public opinion, out of the part he took in that business, that his support of the measure was not real, but pretended.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS here spoke to order. The manner of arguing with which the honourable gentleman commenced was not to be tolerated in that House. He spoke of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not as his friend, but as a member of parliament; upon that ground he affirmed that, by the rules of the House, the honourable gentleman was not entitled to say that the conduct of any member in parliament was dictated by improper motives, or founded upon disingenuous principles.

Mr. FRANCIS continued.—He did not mean, in any of what he had said, to transgress the forms of the House; he only meant to state, that insincerity was imputable to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not upon his own, but the public opinion. When he came forward in the business, he had exhibited the grandeur of eloquence. It had been fortunate for him, that at that time he had ended his political life; nay, it had been happy that these displays had terminated his natural life; for, from that hour he had done nothing but descend from the elevation of character which he once maintained. It could not be irregular for him to tell a story which he heard the other day, not for the sake of argument, but by way of illustration:—A gentleman, after his decision upon the slave trade bill, was asked how he had voted. He said, he had voted with his friend the Minister. “O

could that be?" said his companion; "I understood, you had voted against the bill." "Yes," he replied, "I did; but still I voted with the Minister." Laying, however, all these considerations aside, he hoped for the almost unanimous support of the House this evening. He hoped that the friends of the total abolition would not reproach him for not going far enough in what he was about to propose, when he assured them that the plan was far short of his wishes, but that it was limited by a resolution, not to confound it with any proceeding which had hitherto taken place, and upon which the House had already come to a final determination. Neither did he expect opposition from the planters, who had uniformly manifested themselves friendly to schemes of regulation. If it was asked, what he wished to do? it certainly would not be thought that he had any idea of an abolition, which for the present had met with a decided negative. This then was out of the question. If he was asked, if he intended an emancipation—he would answer No. This was out of his power; and though it were in his power, he would not be disposed to favour the plan, because he dared not venture upon it. Would it be asked, then, if he wished to give them equal rights? He would answer No; for equal rights were equivalent to an emancipation. What then, it would be demanded, did he intend? To bestow upon the slaves every benefit which their situation, compatible with their services, was capable of receiving. It was not his wish to abolish service, but to render them better servants, by making them less slaves than they were before, and, by making them better servants, to improve the minds of their masters. He might as well attempt to abolish the nature of man, as to abolish service. Service was the great characteristic of man; for he was the only animal which had the power of rendering the actions of his fellows useful to himself. What then, it would be required, was the object which he had in view? In order to have a proper notion of his object, it would be necessary to inquire into the actual situation of the negroes in the West Indies.—They have been described by a writer, who is a friend to the trade, as having a house and garden of their own; as having food and clothing supplied by their masters; as attended by the best doctors, when sick; and as amusing themselves, at leisure hours, with springs and snares to catch wild pigeons. Now, according to this account, a negroe in the West India plantations is in a state of Paradise. He knew that there were some persons, whose humanity had so improved their condition, and so far as that extended or operated, he did not deny it. He took every assertion of this sort, however, as an admission that such things ought to be done; and



what was now but the voluntary act of a few, he conceived he enforced in all. He would now shew the reverse of the argument, and what the real condition of the slaves was. There was no law but will—no government but the whip. They had no protection whatsoever from the magistrates—no marriage, that is to say, no bond which constituted the *vinculum matrimonii*—no religion, and of course no propagation. If they had the fruits, they must multiply; and if they had them not, the reverse must be the fact, for one proposition proves the other. If the reverse of the first proposition be true, then it appears, that the quantity of slaves imported into the colonies of late years, and the population would have increased to such a degree, that they must have required no supply in order to keep up the numbers. The necessity, therefore, of continuing the trade proved the axiom to be a demonstration. He should be asked then, do you mean to give these benefits of law, government, marriage, morals, and religion to the negroes? He should answer no—they are not in a state to receive them. They might as well attempt to sow corn on gravel or on marble.

Well-meaning persons have wished, or endeavoured, to give the negroes the benefit of religion. This he thought not only dangerous in their present state. He begged the House, to beware of anticipating his conclusion. That, at first sight, an expression must appear objectionable, he begged to be understood that he entertained a high sense of real piety and religion. He thought that they who left them out in matters of legislation thereby render their system of legislation weak and imperfect. When you teach an uninformed negro to pray, you should remember that despair and abandoned guilt never pray. In the parable of the pharisee and the publican, the publican hid his face. When you would have negroes pray, you must first teach them to hope. When you baptise them, when you might as well baptise your dogs and cats, for what idea can they entertain of that Being, who has, with his weak comprehensions, given every thing to a white man, and dealt out nothing to a black but slavery and oppression? The baptism of negroes, therefore, is the last act of human impiety. He would go to a higher authority for the truth of this doctrine, quoting from a book, which, whether considered as a divine or a human production, certainly contained in it the dictates of common wisdom, and was moreover a book in the recommendation of a layman, he might be thought disinterested. He thought of the parable of the sower and the seed in the New Testament, that verse which says, "The only seed that brought forth fruit was that which fell into good ground," the meaning of w

at the mind, to be capable of instruction, must be first prepared to receive it. Then what is your remedy, in order to impart to them this capability of receiving instruction. In one word it is property, not in money nor in moveables, but in land. Property is the foundation of society. In that acorn is the oak contained, and under that tree he may flourish and be happy, that is with time, peace, and security. Property originates in cultivation, and out of that single act all the rest will gradually proceed or may be introduced in it, for we have it from the mouth of a king, "Truth shall flourish out of the earth." "*Veritas de terra orta est.*" How! can it be said, property to a slave? Yes, property to a slave. Among the Romans the slave possessed a *peculium*, in the possession of which he was protected by the laws. Out of the profits of this *peculium* also he was permitted to purchase another slave, and sometimes his freedom. Of all slaves, perhaps, the condition of the Helots in Sparta was the most cruel, degraded, and abominable, yet they had almost all the landed property under their management, by a fixed tenure. The Spartans only amused themselves in peace or took up arms in wars while the Helots or slaves had the cultivation of the lands entrusted to their care, upon the regular payment of a fixed, determined produce to their masters. The Helot was as secure in his property as any lawful heir with us. Such also was the situation of the Zemindars in Bengal. It was to be observed, also, that the Spartans had often recourse to the Helots both for personal assistance in battle, or supplies of money, in consequence of which a slave was better treated. This might also be considered as a reason why the slaves in our own plantations had been so ready to take up arms. In his opinion it was no proof of affection for their masters, and contentment in their state, as had been urged, that they had done so; but his conclusion was, that the condition of a negro, as a soldier, was better than the condition of a negro in the fields. That was precisely the case with the Helots, and there was little doubt but that it was so in our colonies. In society, or in contact with society, property is infinitely more necessary to a slave than a free man. Without it, he is incapable of receiving any social benefit or modern improvement. The savage is satisfied with his liberty; and having little or no idea of property, has still less of law or government; while in society a free man may contrive to shift without property because he is free. There is an adage that "service is the man's calling," that is, because he knows it to be voluntary. This forms the essential distinction between slavery and service. There can be no doubt whatever that services are reciprocal. Now whatever degree freedom can be imparted to the slave, provided

it be accompanied with profit, the more vigorous and powerful slave will be. Montesquieu has related that the labour of the mines was maintained by little privileges, perquisites, and so that men became reconciled to that most horrible of all punishments, to dig as it were in the center of the earth for the account of the little advantages annexed to their employment: thus Cicero truly observes "*Cupiditate peculii nullam coram recusant durissimæ servitutis.*" These were the principles which he formed his motion. The general object was to give slaves a legal allotment of a cottage and piece of land, with the implements to cultivate it, and security for the produce; but as it was not prepared for objections, and merely submitted himself as some foundation for future proceedings. He thought it would be both convenient and useful to enforce such regulations by law, because some compulsion would be necessary to take in all the islands and oblige every planter and proprietor to adopt this plan. The islands might perhaps be better prepared than others. The way however to enforce it generally, appeared to be by suffering the planter nor proprietor to keep more negroes on his estate than he could really feed, in the same manner as farmers, in this proportion their servants to the stock of their farms. There should also be an allowance in favour of marriage, and the slave should hold his allotment of land for life, and not to be removeable; he wished to bring the condition of a negro slave as nearly as possible to that of a *Villain Regardant*, under the feudal system. If marriages were encouraged, they ought also to be protected, which account penalties should be levied upon rapes and incest. Marriages could never be expected to be frequent while the slaves remained at the disposal of the overseer, and parents were not to look upon their children as a curse, instead of a blessing. He did not intend to name the penalties, because although he had studied the subject closely, he had not decided upon them; he entered so far into the detail as to be of opinion that no man should be suffered to act as an overseer unless he were married, and unless he had arrived at a certain age, because he thought it necessary to have some check upon the passion of an overseer. Women were best suited to look after women, the wife was to be trusted with the care of the female slaves. The greatest improvement of all would be to remove the lash from the hand of the overseer. Accounts of punishment inflicted by this weapon had been brought in evidence, and some of them, particularly on a woman, were too horrible to repeat. The remedy which he proposed for this was to establish a jurisdiction of slaves over



another. It might be said that you could never bring them to do justice. He should be always loth to take the account of a slave's transgression from an overseer, and he believed that good and humane men so long as they found their returns good, had been often imposed upon by so doing. The method he suggested had already been practised. It was to try the culprit by a jury, who were to be selected from the best men, and a right of challenge was to be given both to the overseer and the offender. One of the jury also should be chosen to inflict the punishment, and the overseer might preside to mitigate or remit the punishment, but should never be allowed to judge nor execute. If there was any danger of injustice to be apprehended from this mode, he was inclined to think it would lean to severity. As to the practicability of it, a gentleman, who might possibly be known to many members of that House, but with whom he had not the happiness to be acquainted, had already carried it into effect. The gentleman he alluded to was Sir William Gibbs, of the island of Barbadoes. Look to the sepoy service in India, and you will find the trial, and execution of sepoy malefactors, conducted in the same way, and justice has never yet failed in any one instance, but on the contrary, the commanding officer has often been disposed to mitigate. He gave an instance of a man supposed to be mad, who assassinated Captain Ewers at the head of his regiment, when the grenadiers immediately closed upon him, and they could hardly be prevented from tying him to a horse's tail, to be torn in pieces. He was afterwards executed with some acts of barbarity. Sir William Gibbs has given his slaves land and stock, he encourages marriage, and never has them tried or punished, but by a jury of their own species. The consequence of these wise regulations is, that his negroes do double work, because they are well fed, and no man is better served. Mr. Francis said, he did not know this worthy man, but he respected him for the soundness of his principles. There were other regulations to be adopted, such as the appointment of tribunals and magistrates, from persons of great authority and independent situations. This part he confessed he had not prepared, but he would mention another regulation, which was hinted to him by a relation of his, Mr. Godschall Johnson, which related also to the internal state of the colonies, and was extremely necessary. He meant the appointment of magistrates to superintend the market, to see that traders did not add to the separation of families, that the husband was not torn away from the wife, nor the mother carried into slavery without the child. If it be said that most of these things were already granted and enjoyed,

he took it as he before stated, as an admission, that they be so, and provided they were, there could be no objection to a law of this description, since the compulsion would throw no burden. He thought it proper, before he brought this plan to the House, to consult with Mr. Burke upon it, for although the gentleman had separated himself from those persons with whom he was formerly connected, that separation had not impaired his friendship. Mr. Burke's apprehension of his plan, after his explanation, and he found that he had anticipated his ideas. It was only, his vast and comprehensive mind, with its usual energy, that had framed a wider plan. One sketch of it he had given some time ago to a gentleman in Ireland, and another lately to a very honourable gentleman in that House. Mr. Francis saw it, but not seen it, but from what he understood of it he thought it was embraced too much at once. If he were to speculate upon the subject, he should choose that of Mr. Burke's; but if he were to choose between either, he should prefer his own, because his own was practical. They were not, however, he conceived, to be compared. If Mr. Burke's plan were to be attempted to be put in execution, it ought to be in the House himself to do it, for no vulgar person could reach to execute his grand designs. He would give no way to him, because *non foret incertus*, and because he found himself unable to wield the armour of Achilles. The next question would be, through what medium was this plan to be executed? The greatest difficulty lay in the execution, in which any plan on this subject, of all others, was most likely to fail. For no protection could be afforded to negroes, until they are raised to a state of mind and character, that shall entitle them to credit from their evidence. When he looked to the present means, the plan might be good, and the means unadvised, *vice versa*. He did not, however, choose to leave the execution to the colonial Legislatures, because he conceived they would be both incapable and unwilling to enforce them. It was hardly possible to expect that so many islands should concur in the plan, and he was furthermore inclined to draw a conclusion that they would not do it, from the spirit and tendency of their laws. If there was one provincial or colonial assembly over all the islands, then possibly that assembly might have the power. The spirit of their laws, however, was to enforce slavery, not to abolish it. There may, it is true, be some acts of different aspect; but if those acts are never executed. For wickedness, their laws are like the laws of Pandæmonium; and for ignorance and folly, like the

Bedlam, and not like any act of legislation. As an instance, in case of an injury to a slave whose bones may be broken, or whose eye may be knocked out, no compensation is made to the slave himself, but to the aggrieved party. And who is this aggrieved party but the slave, you would say, whose eye was excavated, or whose arm was fractured?—No, the aggrieved party is the proprietor of the slave, who perhaps has done the injury, but is supposed to feel the loss in his servant's incapacity to labour; and thus the situation of the slave is aggravated, and the cruelty of the proprietor encouraged. But it may be asked, would you stir the question, and hazard the consequence of legislating for the colonies with the example of America before you? In answer to that he would reply, that there is a wide difference between America and the West-India islands, and he would rejoice with Lord Chatham, that America resisted. America had the right on her side, which the West-India islands would not have if they were to secede from the mother country. But if they were to do so he had an internal confidence that we could bear the loss. It was not to be concluded, therefore, that he undervalued the colonies, for that would be an unfair conclusion.—As to the secession of America, he rejoiced, because it opened one asylum for freedom at least, which he was very happy to see, since there was not a prospect of her long retaining any settlement in Europe. If he were asked how he could prove that America had the right on her side, he should say—that she never thought of revolting till taxation was imposed, and that, before that time, she was a pupil to its tutor, or a child to its parent. There is an essential difference between legislating for the good of an object, and taking money from it.—This country had no right to take the property of America, because America was not represented. Nor are the West-India islands represented, some might say. What! are they not represented?—Who are they, then, that carry questions by majorities?—Are they not proprietors who have not mortgaged their estates here, that stand up for the planters and proprietors; and is not the greater part of West-India property here in loans and mortgages? Besides what weapons have the West-India islands to resist with, if they were resolved to do so? They must submit to force, though he scorned force as much as any one. It may be said, we have no right to legislate for them; for they have all internal legislatures. Would the right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Pitt), or any man say, that Parliament had no right to legislate for the West-India islands? Not capriciously, he owned; but we certainly had on great and adjudged cases. The colonial assemblies, however, had no right to complain, because they make no

scruple of legislating for a class of men twenty times more numerous than themselves, without their consent; nay, to govern *ad arbitrium*, without any legislation at all. It is the existence of two such classes as the negroes and the planters, that make the interposition of the British Legislature indispensably necessary. We ever given up the right of legislating for them? Could we not; for by Governor Johnstone's Act, in 1778, we were bound to abstain from taking them, and he did not believe there was any other act of a different tendency, for the power has a claim to obedience, though not to money. The distinction was, that in the nature of things, and in the present time, America must have become free. The Hercules would have been too big for its cradle; it would have broken its leading strings and have acted for itself. The extensive coast and population of America would in time have made her dependent, if our folly and injustice had not hastened the day of her emancipation. The islands cannot increase, their power is fixed by the sea, as their power is by the nature of their position. Upon these grounds, he said, he should move for leave to bring in a bill. Gentlemen might see *in limine*, whether it ought to be insisted; if not, the bill was prepared; and provided it was to be brought in, he should propose to have it read a first time, printed; and as the detail of it was immense, and it was full of imperfections, he should then wish to have it stand over till the next session of Parliament, that if it should afterwards be rejected, it might remain as a foundation for another course of proceeding. He had said enough to convince the House of the importance of the cause which he had espoused, to give them a general notion of the object he had in view, and to persuade them that what he proposed was good in idea, then he should flatter himself that he had done some service to the character of his nation, the interest of a respectable body of men, and the happiness of a large portion of the human creatures. He concluded with moving, "for leave to bring in a bill for the better regulation and improvement of the situation of the negroes and other slaves in the colonies, islands, and plantations in America and the West Indies, belonging to His Majesty and his heirs, and successors."

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR said, that concurring as he did in the principles and object of the honourable gentleman, the general view he had proposed was attended with such unfermountable objections as would induce him even in this stage to give it his decision. He would not, however, like the honourable gentleman to impute improper motives to the conduct of any one, and w

him the credit of being guided by the purest views of humanity and of justice, and were his propositions brought forward in a stage in which they could debate matters of regulation, or were they advanced in a colonial assembly, he would reckon them well entitled to be supported and embraced. When he saw a motion announced, purporting to be for improving the state of the negroes in the West Indies, he immediately felt himself called upon to abandon every engagement of pleasure or of business, and to attend and give his aid to every plan that seemed calculated to effect its purpose without involving any dangerous example. In his mind, however, nothing but complete and total abolition could succeed in producing that amelioration which it was the object of any partial plan of regulation to obtain. The ingenious arguments that had to-night so ably been suggested in pursuance of this idea, convinced him the more that such a plan was attended with difficulties which no talents could surmount: he hoped that the great and radical measure from which every species of improvement would result, and from which it only could result, would not be laid out of sight, that it would never be abandoned till complete and final success was obtained. There were many of the points upon which he agreed entirely with the honourable gentleman. Property, marriage, freedom from the lash, and regulation of the traffic on the coast of Africa, especially the three first, he considered in themselves as extremely good, but he was afraid they were not to be effected by the way proposed. As to the article of property, he did not see well how it could be realised, an objection which the honourable gentleman himself had foreseen, without fixing the negroes to the place where the property existed, and thus innovating in a very decisive manner upon the legal rights in slaves, of which masters at present were possessed. The state of the slaves was so involved with the system which prevailed and the rights arising out of it to the proprietors, that no partial remedy could operate with advantage. With regard to the two others, marriage, and exemption from the whip, he would have heartily concurred in them, had the House been deliberating upon matters of regulation, and had the grand source of the evil been removed. As to the regulation of the trade on the coast of Africa, to this he could never agree. He could never assent to any modification, to any compromise, to any plan of regulation and of improvement, that would in any way seem to indicate a recognition of the principle itself, which had been reprobated and announced by the House after the fullest examination, and by the most solemn resolutions. Nothing but complete abolition with him could ever be admitted as a proper remedy to the evil, or a satisfactory attainment of the great



object which the House had pursued. He did not mean the arguments of the honourable gentleman. Upon the propagation, which he deduced as a conclusion, he was induced the facts upon the subject to differ. The state of the slave operated totally to defeat this object. But if all the advantages which should result from this propagation were not enjoyed, it was an argument for the total abolition of the trade, and a complete prohibition of any new importation! So long as cultivation was more dependent from continued importation than from care and attention to the children of the negroes, no pains would be taken to diminish the propagation answer the necessity. But the principal reason which induced him to give his negative to the present motion was the policy of interfering in the internal regulations of the colonies. He did not oppose it as denying the right. It was a subject which he considered the abstract right of the Legislature, which he did not wish to agitate. He had not forgot the evil that had arisen from the unfortunate American contest, from the discussions on the right. It was better to avoid all abstract reasonings on the subject, and let the Legislature to form regulations, and only to confine to the immediate necessity of the case. He was unwilling to take intermediate points between general admission and negative on the right. As the regulations proposed were to have effect only within the colonies, he did not wish to drive them to the consideration of the American colonies, and bring into question their rights from this country. It had been said, that America was the land of liberty, and the sanctuary of the oppressed. But he considered this country as the true asylum of liberty, the only Country under which it could safely repose. Ours was sanctioned by experience and time. That of America had not yet been stamped with this venerable seal. While abstract notions of government were in men's minds, and had produced so much mischief, he was against broaching any subject that might involve their discussions. It was admitted that the colonies were not represented here, and this was a consideration that should attach us more to a compromise: - then there would be no need to reconcile the jarring interests of assemblies, or provoke any nice discussions. All that was to be done was to stop the supplies of negroes, and the evils connected with them would cease of themselves. It was indeed true, that the islands were represented by their proprietors here; but not as proprietors of lands in the West Indies, but as inhabitants of this country. As well might it be argued, that because persons from a neighbouring kingdom (Ireland) resided in the British Parliament might pass an act, disposing of the pro-



any class of persons in that country as represented in the same manner. He thought, therefore, that no point would be so obnoxious as that, of apportioning the lands of the West-India proprietors, without their consent and without their being properly represented. As he was convinced that the plan could not be effectual, without a total abolition, and as it was so dangerous in its principle, he would give it his negative even in this stage.

Mr. FOX.—The case which we have now before us is unquestionably of very considerable magnitude: I am still, however, ready, when called upon, to give a decided opinion upon the subject, and to shew the reasons upon which that opinion is formed. Before entering upon the discussion of the question, it is impossible not to premise, that whatever be the result of the motion now introduced, the country at large, as well as this House, cannot fail to be gratified with the ability and philanthropy of the honourable mover, and must ever do honour to his humane intentions. It is undoubtedly a question attended with many and serious difficulties, and nothing of an extraneous nature ought, if possible, to be introduced, or enlarged upon; the attention ought not to be diverted from the main object immediately submitted to our decision. I cannot, however, refrain from taking notice of what has been said relative to this country or America, being the proper asylum where the friends of freedom may expect to find themselves secure from the encroachments of arbitrary power, and the miseries of unjust oppression. My honourable friend opposite to me has talked of the blessings of this free Constitution, and the advantages resulting from it to those who live under it. Such things may have existed; but if I am to speak of our Constitution as it now exists, if the retrograde movement which has commenced, is suffered to continue, if the present system of Government is persevered in, there is an end of all those blessings; we may go any where else we please in search of true liberty. Let us look back, Sir, to the year 1784; let us trace the progress of Ministers at different periods, but let us particularly consider what has passed in the present session, and we must perceive such enormous alterations in this blessed Constitution, that those who were formerly acquainted with it, could not possibly know it again. America is said to have a new and untried Constitution; the observation may be just; but I cannot help thinking, that from the late wonderful innovations, the Constitution of this country may practically be said to be of a later date, than even that of America or any other country whatever. Upon this, however, I shall not enlarge farther at present. As to the object of my honourable friend's motion, it seems to be admitted, that the principles

upon which it is supported, are of the most desirable much indeed do I conceive this to be the case, that I t necessary to argue upon the wisdom of them, considered from a strict point of view. He has likewise admitted that the arguments he looks up to, must be of a gradual nature; certainly hit upon the most solid and natural basis on which to build his future superstructure, when he proposes to commence his operations by establishing a system of property among the negroes. Independently then of the principles abstractedly considered, the questions seem to be, first, how far in a prudential point of view it is wise in my honourable friend to bring forward the measure he has now done, as connected with, and introductory to, the abolition of the slave trade; and secondly, what are the principles which he intends his principles to be carried into practice. My honourable friend who spoke last, seemed to consider this as depending upon the propriety of adopting the proposition now made to the House, or of deciding for a total abolition. How happy should I have been that actually the case, and with how little hesitation should I have been for a total abolition. I do not consider that my giving way to one way or another this evening, is to be considered as an abandonment of my receding one step from the ground which I have advanced upon the question of the entire abolition of the slave trade. I have pledged myself to the House upon that point. Those gentlemen who have been equally, if not more strenuous in this cause, I do not presume have any intentions of giving up the cause; but sure I am, that no session shall pass, while the honour of sitting in this House, without my exertions being employed to accelerate this desirable event. I, for one, am determined not to contribute to the increase or perpetuation of the slave trade, which must ever be attached to this House and to the country while that abominable traffic is permitted to exist. I was at the beginning of a session, and there was any possibility of an abolition was likely to take place, I would yield to the proposal of my honourable friend, but the bill introduced for that purpose has been lost. I know not exactly, if the forms of the House admit of the introduction of another, for the accomplishment of the same object; or if they did, I see no certainty of success. When I look forward, I see little rational ground of hope, particularly when I reflect upon the characters and situation of those who were in the minority on the late question. To say that those of the greatest power and influence in the country, and with unquestionably great abilities, could throw little weight into the consideration of any question would indeed be ridiculous.

What was actually the case? The question was introduced during the administration, and with the approbation of a man, who surely had neither less influence nor less personal talents than any of his predecessors, and yet the plan has failed. If this be so, when, where, how are we to procure success? The plan too, Sir, was defeated, after a solemn decision of Parliament; and having disgraced themselves in this shameful manner, what right have I to hope that another occasion will soon be presented for the attainment of this desired object? What then, does my honourable friend propose? That the House will not totally forget all these honourable, humane sentiments they have formerly uttered upon the occasion; but that if they are not inclined to fulfill all they have promised, they will at least shew a desire of doing something. I now come to consider the nature of the means by which my honourable friend proposes to carry his proposition into execution; and upon this undoubtedly the difficulty rests. The right of taxation, and of general legislation, have, I conceive, been improperly confounded together. They are, to all intents and purposes, practically different. This difference was constantly acknowledged in the great question of American independence. The Americans never found fault with our legislative acts, until they involved the question of taxation. Lord Chatham, in a speech to this House, and I do honour to his memory for the sentiment, said, that he rejoiced in the resistance made by America, to every attempt to tax them, for the purposes of revenue: and in the very same speech he added, (I do not say I go all that length with him) that he nevertheless would not permit any matter of commerce to take place, not even a hob-nail to be made in America, without the sanction of the British Legislature. I mention this chiefly to shew the distinction that has been made between Legislative acts of the one kind and the other; but in the American dispute there was a difference taken, not only between acts of general legislation, and of taxation, but between acts of taxation for the purposes of internal regulation, and acts of taxation for the increase of the revenue. Acts of taxation for the regulation of the Post-Office were quietly acquiesced to. It was only when we offered them the alternative to accept or refuse indiscriminately acts of every description passed by the British Senate, that they discovered signs of serious resistance.

With respect to the West-Indies, we have already renounced every right of taxation. My learned friend says, we have no right of this kind—so do I—but he says that he is not ready to admit in what respects Legislative Acts of any other nature may be passed,

and he has brought forward the case of Ireland as in point question. The act passed fourteen years ago, put that matter as to Ireland. In no instance could the difference between Legislation and Taxation, be more clearly ascertained. This source, drew my arguments during the American war every case of either external or internal regulation, the I perfectly submissive; but if the bare intention of raising the purpose of revenue had gone abroad, it would infallibly produced resistance. I must confess, at the same time, that legislation for colonies, is at no time desirable; it ought only to be resorted to when necessity calls for it. How far is this the case at present? I do not wish, it must be observed, upon the occasion, to make a mere letter of the law. My learned friend, and every professional man, would certainly tell me, that a statute that passed any transaction as passing in Jamaica, would be as binding as if it took place in Middlesex; but I am not fond of unnecessary multiplying this legislative authority over persons not actually represented, and where the local situation is almost totally unknown. We are at present reduced to an unfortunate dilemma, and I am obliged to put this question to myself, "Whether it be better to use of a partial remedy which may in some respects be expedient, or permit the evil in its full extent to continue?" I have been accused of throwing out the threat of Independence to the subject of the West-India islands. I do, in answer to this, decidedly affirm, that if it were to become a question, whether these islands should be connected with this country, and the consequence of that connection, all the stigma attending the abominable system of slavery should be ignominiously continued, or that complete independence should take place, I should not doubt on the subject. I am by no means blind to the disadvantages of such a separation. I desire it not: but if the colonies declined to refuse their assent to so wise and humane a proposition, has now been made for the amelioration of the state of the colonies, I should not feel myself inclined to employ either armies or fleets to reduce them to subjection, but would in the language of a gentleman, who, though not present, I cannot name, as a Member of this House, desire them to "go and be happy in their own way," if happiness could be found by acting contrary to the principle of justice, policy, and humanity. If, however, we acknowledged that the British Parliament has the power of legislation, and that it may in some cases of necessity be necessary, I ask, what case of greater necessity can be put, than a case which involves the character and honour of the British name?

occasionally said, that a war to preserve our honour is the only justifiable war. Even this principle, were it necessary, I should not find myself at a loss to support ; but if in any case a legislative act is demanded for the purposes of interest, policy, aggrandisement, or the increase of commerce, are any such objects to be compared with that of removing the national dishonour, which must ever be connected with the support and continuance of this trade in any of its branches ? I shall for these reasons unquestionably vote for the introduction of this bill. Were any person to give me a reasonable ground to hope that an abolition of the Slave Trade would speedily take place, were it held out to me that any other step would be taken towards our melioration of the state of the slaves in the West-Indies, were I to be told that a recommendation should come from the Throne to effect the desirable purpose, I might perhaps be silent upon this occasion ; but let me no longer hear of expectations from the acts of Colonial Assemblies ! When I look at the infernal code of laws under which the poor Negroes languish, when I see they are not considered as men, and reflect one moment upon the penalties to which they are subjected, and the oppression under which they labour, I expect nothing from these assemblies, who give countenance to such proceedings. — It was urged as an argument by my learned friend, that the question of abolition to which he so heartily gives his assent, by no means involves the dispute on the right of Legislation, but that every provision in that bill comes within the acknowledged authority of this House ; but permit me to say that the opposers of that bill, and some of them high in authority, constantly held out as an argument of some weight, the opinion which those immediately upon the spot in the West-Indies, or immediately connected with them, might entertain upon the subject. This, therefore, is no fair ground for opposing my honourable friend's motion. As to the question of Representation, the West-Indies are not, properly speaking, represented in this House, nor is it practicable, perhaps, that it should be so ; no more is Ireland, no more was America. As to their representation in the West-Indies, it might be called a pure representation of property, in consequence of the number of Blacks. But we ought, in this case, to consider the difference between a real and a virtual representation, and the proportion which, in this respect, the West-Indies bear to any other instance known in this country. Were we even to bring to our recollection the time when so many Irish landholders resided in this country, and held seats in this House, and when so much land in Ireland was under mortgage in this country, yet would that bear no proportion to the power and influence of West-India proprietors at the present



moment. A country may undoubtedly be virtually represented. I do not say it is in every instance the best mode—but still where I now do, I must acknowledge the fact; and surely a country was ever virtually represented, it is the West-Indies House. Does not every man hearing me, feel, from the fate of the bill for the abolition of the Slave Trade, that they are both really and powerfully represented in this House? In short, I can see no case can appear to me to call in a more pressing manner upon the legislative authority of the British Parliament than the present, unless we consider as nugatory all we have ever heard, either from those who promote or oppose the abolition of the Slave Trade. Good God! Mr. Speaker, have we come to a solemn decision on the subject, and yet pass year after year, without taking any measure to carry our resolutions into execution? We are guilty of the hypocrisy of the basest sort. I am constrained to vote for any measure of the kind proposed, in order to prove that there is yet sincerity left in the House of Commons. I hoped that my friend in opposing this motion, and with the anxiety he expressed for a total abolition, would have thrown out some hope of such an event being likely to take place—but I am sorry to say, I see no such prospect at the present period. After what took place in the year 1792, and the subsequent flagrant breach of promise then been exhibited, all assurances coming from this House must necessarily be looked upon as vain as frivolous. At the same time I confess I even now think it would be something, were the House during the present session, to come to some solemn resolution on the subject. I have already said, that a Vote on this question must necessarily be given with some degree of difficulty; I will give mine clearly and conscientiously, because such a measure, notwithstanding all the obstacles attending it, is less objectionable, and less contrary to humanity and justice, than doing nothing to alleviate the sufferings which are at this moment attached to slavery in the West-Indies. When an intire abolition of the trade was proposed in 1796, or were it now to be proposed at any fixed period, I should probably object to any regulations of an inferior nature: but the question of Abolition is lost, and I have no opinion left. I have indeed come to this, that the English Parliament refused to stop the abominable traffic in human flesh, and the slaves in the West-Indies are to be left to the humanity of the West-India proprietors. If it were apparent from authentic documents that the Colonies would pass those acts which humanity demands, and that an abolition of the trade would be effected by Parliament, there would be no occasion for any such measure as the present; but



such thing is likely to take place, I find myself under the necessity of voting for the motion of my honourable friend.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR said, that he did not go to the length of saying, that no proposition with regard to the abolition could be entertained by the House this session. He thought that the House might take some step to fulfil the pledge they had given; and the reason why he was averse to take up the subject was, that he would not take it out of the hands of an honourable gentleman, who had prosecuted the subject with such humanity and perseverance, and whose abilities qualified him so well to conduct it.

Sir W. YOUNG stated, that the negroes were already allowed a piece of ground, which they cultivated as their own property. He was surprized that the honourable gentleman talked so lightly of giving away to each negro as much land as would here be a qualification to vote. Had the propositions of the honourable gentleman gone to effect any local remedies by an address to the Throne, in order to be recommended to the Colonial Assemblies, he, as well as others, would have heartily concurred. Slaves had served in the war from real attachment to their masters, and not from the motives ascribed by the right honourable gentleman. He mentioned the aristocracy that prevailed among the slaves, and their propensity to domineer over one another, and concluded, that the mode of trial proposed by the honourable gentleman would not be so advantageous as he had stated.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that he had repeatedly delivered his sentiments at considerable length on the necessity of the abolition of the African slave trade, and would now briefly state his opinion on the motion before the House. He agreed that there was much yet to be done to ameliorate the condition of the slaves. What had fallen from the honourable Baronet was a subject of some consolation, and he contemplated, with satisfaction, that these unfortunate people had experienced some benefit from the discussions which had taken place on the subject. But there was still much to be done, and that could be only accomplished by a total abolition, as pressed with so much eloquence and justice by his learned friend. The system was fundamentally wrong, and no amelioration of the condition of the slaves in the West Indies could remove his objection to that system; but he had sanguine hopes that Parliament would persevere and complete what sound policy urged, and what it had so laudably begun. As the planters became more enlightened, they would find it their interest to soften the condition of the slaves, and he hoped that the spontaneous efforts of the planters would induce them to ameliorate their situations, exclusively

of any compulsory interference by the executive government of the country. The total abolition, he concluded, was the only measure to be expected from the British House of Commons, and without any local act of legislation, he conceived, would be of the least service. His learned friend had pointed out the dangerous and mischievous tendency of attempting, by any internal act of legislation, to correct their condition by interfering with the property of the planters. As long as a torrent of new negroes were poured into the islands, he maintained that every plan adopted must be partial, politic and inadequate to the end proposed. There was no one who would deny that many of the principles laid down by the able member were founded in justice and humanity; it was to instil into their minds sentiments of morality; but all these exertions were fruitless, as long as new negroes were imported into the colonies. This was an opinion which he had long formed, and to which he would never depart, and it was strengthened, not by the result of the debate of this night, but by every discussion which had taken place on the subject. It was a consideration which should induce the House to return to that opinion which it had solemnly expressed on its Journals. The question, he was firmly persuaded, should be suspended; but he was clearly against passing any law in the House of Parliament, that would have in its operation a local application to every estate in the West India colonies. He cautioned the House against stirring a question of such a delicate nature; it would excite a spirit of jealousy, and defeat its own object. The House had relinquished the power of making any alteration with respect to the property of the negroes; it had given out of its hands the power of taxation in the colonies; therefore, if the stirring of this question was more dangerous and hazardous than another, it was that to which he now adverted. If Parliament reserved to itself the undoubted right to regulate every measure that relates to trade, it retained the power of abolishing the slave trade; why then did it not do the measure at once, without involving it in innumerable complications, by attempting to interfere with the local legislation of the colonies? In this view of the question, he felt no difficulty in saying, that consistent with the end he proposed, in finally abolishing the African slave trade, he was bound to give his negative to the present motion. He begged leave to say, with regard to what had been urged, and urged truly, of the necessity of the House fulfilling its own pledge, that no man felt more strongly than he of the propriety of the observation; but how did it apply in the present business? In his opinion, the pledge was not secured or confirmed by the present motion; for the bill of the honourable

leman was totally distinct from the measure of an abolition. So far he could not countenance the motion ; for if the bill was even passed, it did not go a step farther to redeem that solemn pledge of Parliament. There was another observation, which he could not avoid pressing on the notice of gentlemen, which was, when he considered the very small majority by which the motion of his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce) was lately lost, and contemplated the large majority who supported the abolition on other occasions, he had the most sanguine hopes that Parliament, by coming hereafter to a similar vote, would secure its honour, and preserve its consistency.

The SECRETARY AT WAR said, he was fully convinced that all parties in that House sincerely and unanimously wished to ameliorate the condition of the slaves in the West Indies ; every plan that went to that effect would always meet with his concurrence. He acknowledged being in possession of Mr. Burke's plan which had been alluded to, and highly approved of it ; as a part, therefore, of that plan, he would certainly support the present motion of his honourable friend, in hopes that, though it did not go so far as Mr. Burke's, it would be a progressive step towards the same end which that plan, when completed, could not fail to accomplish. He did not think that if they were to proceed in this way, there would be any determined opposition from the planters ; if there was, it would arise principally from a question that had been touched upon relative to the power of this country to legislate in all matters for her colonies, a question which, he agreed with his honourable friend, ought not to be agitated at all, except in cases of absolute necessity, and then only as far as the immediate exigency of the case required. He wished those who were so cautious of venturing on that discussion now, had been as much so upon other parts of the question, particularly the total abolition. He had great and sanguine hopes that much in the way of amelioration would be effected by the colonies themselves ; and he did not despair, but by their exertions, and such plans as that now proposed, the slave trade would be abolished without any danger or discontent in any shape whatever ; and from this idea it was, that he preferred the present and similar regulations, even to an immediate abolition. He could never agree with those who said they would have no compromise on the subject : what had they been doing, since ever the question was first agitated, but compromising in some way or other, from time to time, as they went on ? In consequence of the regulations that had been made, much amelioration had taken place, and that gradual system was, in his mind, the best and most certain way of

finally effecting an abolition. From what they had already seen, it was fair to conclude that slavery would be abolished by the Indians themselves, and equally so to believe, that in the proportion as it was discontinued by them, the barbarism of the natives would be diminished. He concluded by wishing that the same might be brought in.

Mr. ESTE said, as a subject of the country, and a member of the parliament, he must give his decided negative to the plan proposed by the honourable gentleman, as tending to the rapid separation of the colonies from this country. A distinction had been made to be made between taxation and legislation, but he could not see that in this question they could be separated. The agitation of the question of legislating for the colonies was dangerous in the present state of the country. The House should recollect the conclusion of the contest in America, which was sealed with blood; and he entreated them to be warned by that example, for it would be in fact drawing the sword of war to the colonies, to attempt, by an act of the British Legislature, to separate the islands.

Mr. W. SMITH said, that he could not give a final answer to this motion, because he thought it necessary to give his opinion on the vote he meant to give. He agreed with all those who were decidedly for a total and immediate abolition: at the same time he must say, that whilst that could not be obtained, every measure which could possibly tend in any degree to come nearer to that object, and to ameliorate in any way the condition of those unfortunate beings who suffered so much from this unjust, inhuman, and cruel traffic of man-stealing, would meet with every support which could give, and such epithets he always would apply to a measure which never could be mentioned by any British subject but with the greatest abhorrence. The honourable gentleman expressed a desire to dwell but shortly on the different topics that had been introduced into the debate; but he thought it necessary to say something on one particular and essential point, and that was the argument advanced by many gentlemen, that much might be expected from the influence of legislation; and in supporting this argument, they had done what in some degree contradicted, what had been said of colonial legislation by his two honourable friends behind him. In justice to the cause, and to truth, he must call the attention of the House to the state of those islands, and then ask the House, what they had to expect of the fairness from such legislators? For this purpose it became necessary for the honourable gentleman to read the laws of the colonies, and of the islands for the management of their negroes. He took the latest dates in each island, mostly all in 1788, and com-



their absurdity, cruelty, and injustice, and then concluded by giving his vote for his honourable friend's motion.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, he did not intend to follow gentlemen on the general question of the abolition of the slave trade, which had been too much introduced into the debate. When he heard gentlemen talking about the House having disgraced itself by departing from what they had before pledged themselves, he would only remark that he thought this was very disrespectful language to the House, and not at all warranted by any thing that had been done. In short it was more than a strong way which some people had of stating their own opinions, without any regard to the opinions of others as able, as wise, and not less just and humane than themselves. With regard to the question itself, he would repeat what he had stated before, that unless you have the concurrence of the colonies themselves, all that you can do in the way of internal regulation is not worth a straw. The honourable gentleman had opened his speech by desiring the House not to anticipate any of his conclusions before he concluded, and if he was rightly informed, he had been so cautious to conceal his intentions by this motion, that he had not even made them known to his own confidential friends. This caution, that nobody should know what he meant to bring forward, had been very useful to him: thus far, at least, it had secured him a patient hearing. For if he had told that his proposition went to the subversion of all colonial laws, property, and rights, could be productive of no one good purpose, and only tended to produce an immediate and dangerous quarrel between this country and her colonies, certainly he would not have been suffered to bring forward any such proposition. He was therefore right to keep every body so much in the dark. He agreed in the general opinion that the question of right to legislate ought not to be agitated, except in cases of necessity, and he would venture to say, that the bill, if passed into a law, could produce no good, but would be extremely dangerous in its consequences, by opposing to the complaints already made in your colonies a question of doubtful legislation. He contended that the object of this bill went directly to taxation of all colonial property, real and personal, and could be brought forward for no other purpose but that of creating dispute. Some gentlemen had asserted, very idly in his opinion, that if this alternative was put, whether will you lose the West-India islands, or abolish the slave trade? they certainly would do the latter at the expence of the former. But in fact there could be no such alternative, for if you were quit of the West-Indies to-morrow, you would be no ways nearer the abolition of the slave trade.—

Much abuse had been thrown out against the colonial legislature; but they certainly were not all to be vindicated; but in that, and in other things, they had been gradually improving, and might be expected to improve. Neither should things be judged of by the most exceptionable parts: if they were to look at the state of this country, many laws equally bad would appear. Besides, while they were abusing colonial legislation, they must reflect that they were abusing the King and Council, for all had been assented to in this country. He was surprised that gentlemen talk of not agreeing to any compromise, and did not know how they would act on Thursday next, when the bill relating to the middle passage would be before them? Would they do it, with all the advantages it obtained for the comfort of the colonies, merely because they had not carried the total abolition? He supposed they could. But feeling himself to get more than he wished or intended, he concluded by giving a negative to the motion.

Mr. M. ROBINSON said, he wished the motion in relation to the discussion of the West-India expedition, (alluding to the motion given by Mr. Sheridan) had preceded that which had been introduced on the present occasion. The maintenance of the colonies in the possession of Great Britain, should be the object of the contemplation of its Parliament; and any regulation, till the security of their security was established, was irritating or nugatory, unless some considerable exertion was made, and that in the most expeditious imaginable, he trembled to think of the separate state they were likely to be reduced to, with respect to their dependance on this country: of the learned Serjeant who took an early part in the debate, he spoke in terms of the highest commendation—a lawyer of eminent talents, and dignified character, in his profession, quitting its pursuits to attend to the exigencies of his country, and arrange himself on the side of her constitutional and essential interests, afforded a brilliant example for the imitation of his learned colleagues, and marked him out as a signal beacon to that State, in whose cause so noble an exertion had been made. The principles inculcated in his excellent speech, commanded the perfect acquiescence of every honourable member; the idea of imposing taxation on the colonies was dangerous in the extreme; if hoped, it would never again be attempted; at the same time, he was not prepared to condemn the principle which had been introduced in the motion, now adduced before the House; in consequence of the introduction, laws had been framed, and lately framed; in Jamaica and other islands under the British Government, had been laws sanguinary and oppressive, beyond what he could



ceived the existence of in a civilized country; after the general indignation their communication had excited, he could not but think, some admonition was necessary to impress on the minds of the West-India planters the necessity of obviating the dreadful consequences (to themselves as well as their dependants) that must be the result of the continuance of a system so revolting to humanity, and he trusted, the gentlemen who were proprietors of our valuable possessions in that part of the world, would no longer suffer such abominable abuses to pass current, under the sacred name of law and justice. It was not without astonishment he had heard, from a right honourable Secretary, a confession of his having given his assent to them as a Privy Counsellor in this country; such conduct could admit of no other excuse, than the being unacquainted with those laws to which he had made himself a party; and what a miserable defence was that for a man high in office, to confess he had neglected the duties of his situation! no man was justified in setting his hand to a paper the contents of which he was ignorant of; and the right honourable gentleman was reprehensible for his negligence, in proportion to the mischievous tendency of that perversion of legal authority he had contributed to give a sanction to.

Mr. MANNING contended, that the regulations adopted by the colonial assembly of the island of Jamaica in the consolidated act passed in 1792, which were most advantageously framed for the happiness of the negroes, were, in themselves, sufficient to prevent any necessity for having recourse to the measures proposed by the honourable gentleman in his intended bill. If, therefore, the honourable gentleman had recourse to that act, he would find that the greatest attention had been particularly given to the rearing of children; and though he did not positively assert that the measures had been adopted in all the other islands, yet he had every right to infer, that they had been equally attentive to promote the happiness of their negroes.

Mr. FRANCIS, in reply, observed, that if the declarations which had been so frequently, and so strongly made by those gentlemen who opposed his motion in favour of the slaves, had been attended to by themselves, he should not that night have brought forward his motion. He apprehended, both from the result of a former debate, and the probable event of that night, that nothing effectual would be adopted for the relief of the unhappy men whose miserable situation was submitted to the feelings and judgement of the House. The right honourable gentleman confounded the object and means; but if he refused the means, he should at least give no opposition to the object, and he was at liberty to pursue it after his

own method. It has been urged, that the bill which he to introduce went to the extent of taxing the colonies; but he positively denied that it could bear such a construction. Mr. concluded by saying, that he would not press a division on the House, but hoped that gentlemen would come forward to support and propose measures to alleviate the distresses of the slave.

The motion was then put, and negatived without a division.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying that he may be pleased to give directions that there be laid before the House copies of the several acts relating to the regulation, &c. of the slaves, passed by the different colonial assemblies since 1788."

Mr. FOX desired to be informed by the right honourable man (Mr. Dundas) who declared his opinion, that the slave should be confined to slaves under a certain age, whether that such a limitation should be carried into effect by the Parliament of this country, or by the colonial assemblies? He also desired to be acquainted, whether it was the right honourable gentleman's intention, in consequence of that opinion, to bring forward any measure of that nature?

Mr. DUNDAS replied, that he certainly could not propose such a measure at a moment when the country was involved in war. Were he to do so, he might be justly charged with inconsistency.

Mr. SMITH's motion was agreed to.

*Thursday, 12th April.*

Mr. ROSE moved, that there be laid before the House a statement of account of all the sums of money issued by His Majesty's Treasury on the 4th of December, 1795, pursuant to Addresses of this House, and which have been made good by Parliament.—Ordered.

The bill for allowing costs to Witnesses, at the discretion of the Court, in cases of Misdemeanor as in cases of Felony, was read a second time, and referred to a Committee up stairs, on account of its being committed through a Committee of the House.

Mr. ABBOT. In consequence of the notice which I gave to the House in honour to give yesterday, I shall now beg leave to mention a matter which appears to me of very considerable importance; and at the same time, that the measures which (according to my opinion) ought to be taken at present will not be attended to.

great difficulty, nor liable (as I should hope) to any objection whatever.

This subject, Sir, is the general *state of all our laws which are of a temporary nature.*

Gentlemen are aware that a partial inquiry into this matter is annually intrusted to Committees appointed for that purpose—and the Committee of the present year have pursued their ordinary labours, according to the customary course of its duty, and according to the limited nature of their authority. But, Sir, upon revolving this matter in my own mind, and searching into the usage of Parliament in former times, and conferring with several persons whose peculiar stations, pursuits, and habits of life render them more immediately conversant with subjects of this sort, it does appear to me—that we owe it to ourselves and to the public, to extend the scale of our inquiries, and to enter upon a larger field of investigation; not merely confined in the ordinary way to the consideration merely of *such* expiring and expired laws as are immediately, and at present fit to be revised or continued; but, comprehending a view of all the temporary laws whatever, and providing ourselves with a permanent register of their contents.

With regard to the *expiring* laws, the absolute necessity of it is obvious. Mischiefs may happen (and such mischiefs have happened heretofore) by the undesigned expiration of a law which ought to be continued, or by the supposed continuance of a law which has in fact expired, a circumstance which may very possibly escape notice where any such laws have originated at any remote period of time, and now lie buried in the multiplicity of our Statutes. If, Sir, in the execution of criminal justice any one such instance of mistake should occur (as in other times has actually occurred in civil cases) every man would shudder at an event which might be irretrievably fatal. A register, therefore, of these laws, with their duration accurately noted, and always present to the attention of Parliament, would effectually prevent such a calamity.

The knowledge of our *expired* laws, if not of equal urgency, is perhaps not of less importance. To have a ready view of all the experimental legislation of former ages, in regard to such matters as the course of time or probable chances of public affairs may force upon our considerations, must certainly be desirable. It would enable us to profit readily by the experience of our ancestors; and either to preserve a consistent policy by re-enacting similar laws under like circumstances, or to improve upon the given precedents of former ages; and at all events not to depart from them unadvisedly, whenever such a departure might be judged prudent and

politic. A digested Report of this class of laws would a all these important ends.

If, Sir, the House should be disposed to adopt the motion, I shall now therefore have the honour to submit to their consideration, I can venture to assure them, that although the execution may require some length of labour, and although it may be in some degree operose, nevertheless the result will be expected within no great compass of time. And, Sir, I but hope that there may possibly be derived from this inquiry useful information upon the general condition of our Statute, if the House should be farther inclined to authorise the Committee to report such observations as may arise out of the matter to their consideration.

The motion itself---which I have now, Sir, the honour is, therefore,

“ That a Committee be appointed to inspect and compile the temporary laws of a public nature, which are expired or about to expire, and to report to the House a statement of all such expiring laws as shall appear to them to have been made upon occasion of the like may recur hereafter. And also a statement of all expiring laws of a public nature:---describing each Statute in principal matter, date, chapter, section, and title; and distinguishing the duration of such as are expiring: together with observations of the said Committee arising out of the several referred to them.”

The Committee was then named: five to be a quorum, with power to send for persons, papers, and Records; and to sit from time to time, place to place.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR was happy not only to second the motion, but to thank his learned friend for bringing it forward. He was aware of the danger of mistakes being committed in the administration of justice, in as far as it was regulated by temporary Statutes, those most learned in the law. He had witnessed, on several occasions, very narrow escapes from error, merely from a want of a proper digest of temporary Statutes. A digest of the expiring laws would be of singular use to the Legislature, as they would be able to judge whether they ought to be again renewed or permitted to die away. And by having a digest of those laws already expired, they would be furnished with a full experience for the direction of their conduct in their legislative capacity.

The motion was carried, and a Committee appointed,

The persons named in the Committee were,

Mr. Abbot	Mr. Hoart
The Master of the Rolls	Mr. Mainwaring
The Attorney-general	Mr. Banks
The Solicitor-general	Mr. I. Hawkins Browne
Mr. Serjeant Adair	Mr. Bramston
Mr. Charles Townshend	Sir Adam Ferguson
Mr. Powys	And Sir William Scott.

Mr. SHERIDAN put off his motion for the production of certain papers relative to the West Indies to a more convenient day.

*Wednesday, 13th April.*

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the propriety of allowing the importation of molasses.

Mr. ROSE then moved the following Resolutions, which were agreed to---

1st, That it is the opinion of the Committee, that it is expedient to allow the importation of molasses, in the ships of any state of Europe in amity with this country, not belonging to His Majesty, for a limited time, duty free.

2d, From any place not in Europe, not belonging to His Majesty, and in amity with this country, upon paying a duty of 3 per cent.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that he had come down on purpose to move for certain papers relative to the West-India Expedition. He was encouraged to think that they would not be refused, when he recollected the desire which had been expressed at a former period for a full and impartial inquiry into the subject. If the prospect of peace had been nearer than at present it appeared to be, it might be said that such an inquiry would be instituted with greater propriety after the re-establishment of tranquillity; but in the prospect of continuing in the same calamitous course in which we had hitherto proceeded, and under the same weak and blundering councils by which we had been guided, an inquiry into past errors became more necessary than ever. He was surprised to find, since he came to the House, that the King's ministers had any objection to the production of these papers. He should, however, now move that they be laid before the House; and if they were refused, he would name a future day for the discussion. Mr. Sheridan then



moved for a string of papers relative to the West-India amongst which were,

An account of the number of men sent out to the V under Sir Charles Grey in the close of the year 1793.

An account of the number of men drawn from this and placed under the command of Lord Moira.

An account of the number of men taken from Sir C after the conquest of Martinique and Guadaloupe, and Domingo.

A return of the reinforcements sent out to St. D the dates of their sailing and of their arrival.

A copy of all the letters which were written by Admin and General Abercrombie, respecting the delay of the expedition.

An account of the mortality of the troops lying on transports while they remained at Portsmouth.

An account of the number of ships foundered, and that were lost after they had failed.

And a copy of the letter for the appointment of a bo intend the transport service.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS objected to the product papers, because they would either tend to disclose inform ought not to be made public, or afford only a pa for an inquiry into the conduct of Ministers.

Mr. Chancellor PITT animadverted upon the line which Mr. Sheridan had adopted in the business. He a day for bringing forward his motion, and then fin wanted information upon the subject, after that day w moved for papers which he never thought of before, b now conceived to be necessary to the object which he h

Mr. SHERIDAN proposed to adjourn the debate se'nnight; which was agreed to by the House.

General TARLETON moved, that there be lai House a copy of the letter, dated at Portsmouth or Plym by the Count de Sombreuil, and addressed to the righ William Windham, Secretary at War.

The SECRETARY AT WAR said, he was h this opportunity of explaining himself upon a subject. lars of which he wished much to communicate to t When the subject of the Quiberon expedition was fir he was called upon to produce that letter, though he v that the gentlemen who thus called upon him, knew w was not in his power. This letter from Portsmouth,



to him, was alluded to in another letter from the Count de Sombreuil to Sir John Warren, was published at his desire, and in which he expressed a wish that his letter to him (Mr. Windham) should be made public. At that time, he doubted much if he could find the letter, and he had even some obscure recollection of having destroyed it. In the letter, however, he remembered that there was not one word which had any relation to the expedition. And in this idea of it, he was confirmed by the recollection of Mr. Lewis, a gentleman of undoubted honour in his office, through whose hands the letter had passed, and who recollected that its contents related entirely to the nature and extent of his command, and to a conversation of a private nature, which had passed between them previous to his leaving town. This was the situation in which he was placed when the letter was first called for. Fortunately, however, the letter was afterwards found by a Colonel Ramsay, a gentleman to whose services he was much obliged, and the letter should be given to the public in one way or other. As it was of a private nature, he saw no propriety in its being laid before the House; but the request of Monsieur Sombreuil should most undoubtedly be complied with. As to the Quiberon expedition, he would only say, that he would not shrink from any responsibility which might attach to him from the part he had taken in the business. Public reasons might render it necessary to resist any inquiry that might be demanded on the subject. He foresaw the sarcasms that this refusal would give rise to; but in the discharge of official and public duties, it was necessary to overlook attacks of such a nature.

Mr. FOX said, that at the beginning of the session he had mentioned the subject of Sombreuil's letter, but upon his honour as a gentleman, he had no knowledge that it was missing, and it was only a few days, at least he would say weeks, since he had heard the circumstance. He was glad to find, however, that the right honourable gentleman himself had considered the subject in the same way in which it had been felt by that side of the House, as a call of honour upon him to produce the letter which was called for in so interesting a manner by Sombreuil, and it was natural that some strictures should be passed upon its not having made its appearance. He did not deny that it was sometimes necessary to resist inquiry; but that this necessity had occurred so often to the present Ministers was somewhat extraordinary. Were he in such a situation he would at least feel the propriety of not vauntingly challenging inquiry which it was determined to resist; and he thought the right honourable gentleman and his colleagues might perform their duty equally well if they

did not so often recal to the recollection of the House, the of inclination which it required on their part to abstain from inquiry. Such modesty would be more becoming than language Ministers held while in pursuance of what the public duty, they were resolved to quash every investigation of their conduct.

General TARLETON, in justification of his motion for the passage from the letter of Count De Sombreuil to Sir John Mordaunt in which he referred to a letter sent from Plymouth to Mr. Pitt, expressing a strong desire at the same time, that it should be published.

Mr. WINDHAM said, the letter was dated from Portsmouth, and that Count de Sombreuil, he believed, never was at Plymouth.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, as the honourable gentleman had determined to persist, he would move the order of the day.

Mr. SHERIDAN remarked, that it was probable that the letter adverted to might be written from Portsmouth, and that the Count de Sombreuil was owing to the Count de Sombreuil; but certainly the Count de Sombreuil, from the tenor of the letter, as stated by the right honourable gentleman, must have considered it as necessary to be made a full vindication of his honour, and to exculpate him from any blame with respect to the unfortunate expedition to Quiberon. Such was the estimation in which the Count held the letter, as stated from his sentiments contained in that sent to Sir John Mordaunt. The production of this paper was so far necessary, as the Count had asserted, that the French prisoners with whom he was employed, and who were employed by Government, were bribed to betray him. If this were the case, surely it were proper to inquire how far His Majesty's Ministers were implicated in the conduct of this unfortunate and melancholy expedition.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that the first time the Count de Sombreuil was mentioned, he put in his claim, that he was not bound to submit to an extensive inquiry into that affair, without sufficient reason was shewn why such inquiry should be instituted.

Mr. FOX said, if Ministers were determined to resist all inquiry, because, in their mind, it was not consistent with their public duty, they certainly ought not to arrogate to themselves the praise of being faithful, because they refused to submit to investigation. He said, that the right honourable gentleman from any wish to conceal the conduct of the Count de Sombreuil; but on the face of the business, it was absurd to say, that the Count had not attached considerable importance to some quarter, as far as related, to the unfortunate expedition.

Mr. WINDHAM declared, that when first the letter was mentioned, as not being of an official nature, it did not make that impression on his mind as to render him competent to state what he had already mentioned, and which he was enabled to do more fully from a subsequent perusal. The Count de Sombreuil had not been more than three or four days in the country when the letter was written from Portsmouth, and could not be supposed to possess all that information which the right honourable gentleman imagined. He would not proceed farther in the business at present, but reserve himself until it should be more fully discussed.

After a few words from General TARLETON, the House passed to the order of the day.

Mr. FOX moved the order of the day, that the bill to prevent the purloining of pewter pots be now read a second time.

Mr. DENT objected to the bill, on the grounds which he had formerly stated. The clause which obliged the publicans to bring their liquor in gallons to the houses of their customers would be attended with infinite inconvenience, particularly to the industrious poor, who would be induced to go to the house of the publican and spend their week's wages, because they would have no opportunity to drink it at home.

Mr. FOX said, a bill of this nature passed in the reign of George the first, and was not attended with the inconveniences stated. The loss of the publicans was enormous, occasioned by the purloining of pewter pots, and amounted from 5000l. to 6000l. annually. The House could not suppose that they submitted patiently to have their property stolen. It was certainly protected, like all other species of property, by the law, but during the years 1793, 1794, and 1795, there had been no less than two hundred and fifty-three persons tried for the stealing of pewter pots, nineteen out of twenty of whom were convicted. The question was, whether it was not for the public advantage to prevent the necessity of so many trials and convictions for offences, which from the facility there was to commit, there was much temptation. He could not agree, as a remedy, to an additional punishment; and the only other alternative was to remove the facility of the theft. Private arrangements among the publicans had been attempted, and had failed, because individuals were tempted to sacrifice their general interest to a little immediate advantage. It was for these reasons he wished the bill to go to a Committee, and particular clauses might there be adjusted.

Mr. LECHMERE stated the losses that arose from the stealing of pewter pots. He was informed that the publicans did not mean

to refuse to carry the liquor to private Houses, they only individuals to provide pots for themselves. Had the bill altered the situation of the poor worse, he would not support it if it did.

The House divided; For the bill, 31—Against it, 9—  
22.

Upon the question that the bill be committed, there were 35 members present, the House adjourned.

*Thursday, 14th April.*

Mr. LECHMERE said, he had given notice of a motion which he intended to bring forward before a Committee of the House this day, to prevent the withholding of corn from the poor and also to prevent the adulteration of flour. These were the chief grievances to the industrious labourers in this country, which ought to be attended to by the House; but it gave him pain to think that when any business respecting a loan, a contract, or any other business of that kind, was to be brought forward, the House was always full from one end to the other. But when the cause of the poor was to be brought forward, the House was so thin, that it was scarcely a sufficient number in it to make a House. When a proposition was made and objected to by any person on either side of the House, the members were counted, and there were always too few to form a House, the matter for the time fell to rest in consequence of non-attendance. This, he was sorry to say, was a great reflection on that honourable House. If the conduct, public business was very improperly impeded. The circumstance of the House being so thin was the cause that prevented him from bringing forward the business he gave notice of for this day. He should bring it forward on Tuesday next. He should be brought subject to the Committee on the high price of corn, and on Tuesday that that Committee should then sit.

*Friday, 15th April.*

The dog-tax bill was read a first time; and on the second reading,

Mr. Chancellor PITT gave notice that he should be claiming some of the money imposed by this bill for the benefit of the poor, and that he should also persist in drawing a distinction between persons liable to pay this tax. The plan which he proposed to the Committee was that which he had before brought forward to the House, of charging three shillings upon every owner of a dog, and two shillings of which he meant to apply to the poor.



for the public use, and to apply the other to parochial purposes; but from those persons who keep a dog and do not pay assessed taxes, he should demand one shilling, which might be paid as a parish rate. There was another benefit which might be derived from this tax by the State, which was, to subject those persons who keep more than one dog, and are able to afford it, to a heavier penalty. He should propose in the Committee to carry it up as high as five shillings for every dog, four of which he should apply to the service of the State; and at this rate, though he did not carry his computation so high as the honourable gentleman (Mr. Dent), he calculated the tax would produce a revenue of 100,000*l.* per annum.

Mr. DENT was sorry to differ from his right honourable friend, but he conceived the only benefit to be derived ought to be in regard to the poor-rates, and if the money were applied to any other use, he thought the tax would be unproductive and unpopular.

Mr. JOLLIFFE offered some observation, but the Speaker reminded the House that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had only given notice of some propositions he meant to bring forward in the Committee.

Upon the motion for the second reading on Monday next,

General SMITH thought that day would be too early to have it printed.

Mr. DENT wished only to get gentlemen's general opinions and ideas upon it, and the bill might afterwards be re-printed.

Sir W. YOUNG concurred with General Smith, that Monday would be too early.

The second reading was then ordered for Wednesday next.

*Monday, 18th April.*

Mr. ROSE moved for an account of the quantities of wine imported and exported in the last two years, and the quantities imported and exported for the last five years, to be laid upon the table; which were afterwards brought in, and referred to the Committee of ways and means.

Mr. ROSE laid an account upon the table of the provisions from the civil list for the suffering clergy and laity of France, which was referred to the Committee of ways and means.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose to move for the production of a paper which had before been moved for by an honourable friend of his (General Tarleton) and had been refused. After that refusal, the House might judge of his surprise and astonishment when he saw the letter of the Count de Sombreuil published to-day in the *True Briton*. He did not hesitate a moment to pronounce that publica-

tion authentic and genuine, being influenced in his opinion by the complexion of the journal in which it was published, the particular features of the letter itself. He spoke in defence of those persons who heard his honourable friend produce the production of that letter, and he reminded them that his honourable friend assigned as his reason for doing so, that it was possible the letter contained not only an exculpation of Lord Sombreuil himself, but a crimination of those persons who advised and conducted the unfortunate expedition in which he was engaged. He appealed to the recollection also of the House, to the right honourable gentleman who refused the motion (Mr. Windham) that the production of the paper was refused, and related solely to a business of a delicate and private nature. He said, completely then was he disappointed and astonished on perceiving a copy published in the *True Britain*, which he had every reason to believe authentic, to find it so far from relating exclusively to a business of a private nature, to belong entirely to matters of public moment; and the only excuse he could alledge for the right honourable gentleman's not having made such a declaration was, that he had either read it in a slight and cursory manner, or at a distance of time, and the multiplicity of business in which he was engaged, that he had wholly forgotten its contents, else it would be impossible that he should have given it such a colour. It did not appear from this letter that there was any paltry recital upon the persons who advised and conducted that unfortunate expedition, but a foundation for a charge of the most marked partiality. It might be true that the right honourable gentleman was not the sole hand in that expedition, or that he had no fault to find in advising it than the rest of his colleagues; but whoever were the authors and abettors of it, there was very clear evidence that it was not one word about any business of a private nature. The letter from Portsmouth; while there were expressions which conveyed the strongest condemnation of sending that expedition in the most gross, the most treacherous manner. He understood, however, to read the letter to the House, in which he could find nothing in it, even by construction, of a private nature.

#### Translation of the FIRST LETTER.

On board the *John*, Portsmouth

Sir.

July 8, 1799.

The short stay which I made at London not having permitted me the honour of seeing you more than once, and my sudden departure prevented me from conversing with you on several points of importance to me in my present situation, I have sufficient confidence in your candour to be convinced, that I shall find such instructions as will



for a guide, and enable me to support the responsibility attached to my conduct, as well towards you as towards the troops under my command.

A full conviction of the necessity of subordination, joined to a zealous devotion to the cause in which I have embarked, induce me to fly with precipitation at the first signal I receive, and never allow me to urge the smallest objection. I say nothing of the discretion which a Government has a right to expect from those it employs; I have long since given sufficient proofs of mine; and I have reason to believe, that they are such as will enable me to obtain, at least, those marks of confidence which are due to my situation.

I have the honour to observe to you, Sir, that I am going with troops, of whose destination I know nothing but by public report, neither am I acquainted with their means of subsistence, nor, in the smallest degree, with the rules by which I am to regulate my conduct. What will be necessary, with regard to ammunition, with which I am not, to my knowledge, provided, and with regard to the support of those with whom I am to act; the means by which I am to carry on my correspondence with you, in a distant situation; and from whom I am, in all cases, to receive orders—These are points on which I request you to give me such instructions as will serve as a basis for my conduct.

I had the honour also to request that you would let me have an officer from the department of inspection—If you send me such a person, pray chuse a man who speaks both languages, that he may, on occasion, assist me in the translation of your letters; and that your orders may only be known to an officer chosen by Government. I have the honour to be, with respect,

Your very humble servant,

COUNT CHARLES DE SOMBREUIL.

This was the private letter, he said, which the right honourable gentleman had stated to be interesting to the writer's feelings only, and not at all so to the public. And now he would read the other, addressed to the right honourable gentleman, which accompanied that to Sir John Borlase Warren, and which was represented to be sent to him as a testimony of particular respect and gratitude:—

#### Translation of the SECOND LETTER.

From the Count de Sombreuil to the right honourable William Windham, dated, Aurai, 22d July, 1795, received by the hands of his servant, who remained with him till the hour of his death.

Sir,

The letter which I have written to Sir John Warren will give you every information in my power to afford, as well on my present situation, as on past events; I will not remind you of the letter which I wrote to you from Portsmouth, as you doubtless feel the force of the remarks which I there made: you must be sensible how much my heart has to suffer in these last moments; independently of the regret which I experience for the fate of my companions, you know what sacrifices an order so prompt obliged me to make.

I request you, Sir, to be so kind as to give to the bearer, a faithful man, who has never abandoned me (and whom the losses I have sustained incapacitate me from rewarding) the sum of five hundred louis, to be

shared with my other servants.—This request will not appear as I have lost several Government securities to a greater amount.

I also recommend to you, Sir, the two persons about whom I have written to you, before I left London.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

To Mr. Windham,  
Secretary at War.

Your very humble servant,  
COUNT CHARLES DE SOMBREUIL

Now the House would connect the remarks there made with those in the preceding letter, and perceive what general impression there was to business of a private nature. This letter displayed the characteristics of a brave mind; it did not reproach the honourable gentleman for his conduct, but it reminded him of the remarks in the former letter—That he was dispatched upon an expedition, of the destination of which he was ignorant, that he was ignorant also of the particulars relative to the command, their subsistence, and their ammunition. Here was that whistle-whaffling stuff which the right honourable gentleman had pretended, and only a couple of lines which could be said to relate to that beautiful and accomplished woman to whom his affections had been pledged, and who had since been reported to be disordered in her mind. He concluded, that when a man of worth, valour, and honour was ready to perish in what he considered to be a just cause, it was a shame and a reproach to his Ministers, to abandon him, as they had done, to his fate. In conceiving that these letters contained the strongest proof of the gross and scandalous manner in which the expedition to France had been conducted, he moved, “That copies of the letters written by Count Charles de Sombreuil, to the Secretary at War, be laid upon the table.”

General SMITH seconded the motion.

The SECRETARY AT WAR said, that he had no observations made before, which he less understood, or was less prepared to answer, though he did not imagine it very difficult to answer them in a way satisfactory to the House, and which would justify his conduct. He would first recall the terms of the motion to the recollection of the House, and then give his reasons for persisting in his determination to oppose the motion, not that he was unwilling to discuss the question, but because the papers were already in possession of the letters. Previous, however, to his further comment, he could not help remarking, that this question was brought forward at a moment when the House was under an anxious expectation for business of more immediate importance, upon which account he would not now detain them by entering into much detail. In the first place, then, with respect to the

of these letters, he insisted that the letter from Portsmouth did not contain one word with regard to the expedition, or to the person at the head of it; nor was there any reflection or animadversion on the conduct of Administration: and the only motive that Count Sombreuil could have, in his last letter, for referring him to the expressions in the former were, he imagined, that, harrassed and confounded as he was, in his last fatal moments, he referred him rather to what was passing in his mind, than to what he had actually committed to paper. Such was his impression when he gave a description of those letters to the House, and such was his impression now. The reference, however, was so obscure and vague, that there was no knowing what he meant, nor did he, perhaps, know exactly what he meant himself. The letter certainly had a reference to some painful circumstances interesting to his private feelings, with respect to the uncertain situation in which he was going, and the limits of his commands. To this letter, however, nobody would attach farther importance. There were one or two observations of the honourable gentleman, upon which, although hurried by the impatience of the House, he begged leave to comment. He was charged with cruelty in sending this gallant officer away upon short notice. Now, how did that *prima facie* apply?—There surely could not be much complaint upon his being sent away on a specific appointment. He came from Yarmouth to London, when the troops under his command were ready to sail, and he might say, that even then Count Sombreuil was not sent out, for he had pressed him to defer his departure. There was scarcely any thing else worth answering; yet, notwithstanding, he would inform the House, that Count Sombreuil, immediately after his arrival in London, waited upon him with inquiries about his troops, when he was told they were under orders to sail. He then, for the first time, opened to him his intentions of marriage, when he advised him, not as a public man, but one who participated in his feelings, to defer his departure, partly hoping that the expedition, as is frequently the case in such enterprizes, might be delayed; partly from his sense of the character of Count Sombreuil, which he knew was too high to suffer any imputation; and partly from a conviction, that if he should be too late for that expedition, he would not be absent from any other for which he might be wanted. But, on being pressed for the distinct truth, he was obliged to confess that the troops were really under sailing orders, though he promised to make farther inquiry; and he believed he afterwards wrote a note, repeating the arguments he had before used. He hoped no man would impute dissingenuity and want of

candour to him, though he was apprehensive, from the behaviour of gentlemen on the other side, that they were inclined to

The SPEAKER called him to order, by observing that it was not proper to impute such motives to any honourable member of that house.

The SECRETARY AT WAR continued. Anger and jealousy, he said; he hoped he should be allowed it, as he had a just cause for that sensation. He told the Count, in his note, that he was known to be ever ready for service, an action, more or less, could make no difference,—when the Count used a particular expression, which he had repeated in his letter from Portsmouth, he would go upon the slightest signal; and he accordingly set out that night. He stated, that there was no criminality in Government sending out the Count without distinct explanations as to the nature of his command. The truth was, that he was not sent out to receive the command, and it was sufficient for him, when he arrived at the troops, to know under whose orders he was to act. He did not consent to the production of the letter in any other way than in the shape in which it is now before the public, although he was aware that an injurious insinuation would lay against him. However, he disregarded every personal consideration, and if he could get no other person to join him, he would offer his resignation as repugnant to the public service. If the letter was produced before the public, there it was; and he desired that they should look at it, and examine it, and then determine whether it justified the accusation brought against him. Of this at least he was assured, that the gentlemen on the other side either knew, or were disposed to suppose, that he had lost the letter, when they originally mentioned its production, else they would not have called for it.

General SMITH remarked, that if the House or nation required any farther testimony of the gallant conduct of the Count de Sombreuil, they had only to remember what the right honourable gentleman had just spoken of him; that instantly after he had arrived in this country, he renounced his dearest connexions, to engage in activity in what he deemed essential to his honour. He did not repeat all that the right honourable gentleman had said, but every man must see that his arguments did not correspond to the subject. He thought so, at least, and he would undertake to prove it. The letter, in his opinion, concerned the public service, and nothing but the public service, except so far as it related to the character of Sombreuil. He kept in mind the letter of John Borlase Warren, together with the various disasters in the expedition; and he conceived that the Count de Sombreuil

anxious for his character, hoped the honourable gentleman would publish what in his opinion contained all that could justify his conduct. This was the last solemn request of a dying man, who had never forgotten his duty, and was likely to review his unfortunate situation with a circumspcct and scrutinizing eye. It was to be remembered that he had embarked without any information on the subject of the expedition; that he was neither furnished with orders nor instructions; that he was considered as a junior officer, and was ignorant of the nature of the command. Now when he recollected that the command was given to Puisaye, a man whom many officers thought it a disgrace to serve under,—a man who was unworthy of the charge entrusted to his care, and who had never attained a higher rank than that of Major,—he had pretty strong reasons to believe, that if the Count de Sombreuil had known the command was to be given to such a man, he would never have gone. It was obvious that Puisaye knew nothing of his profession, and therefore it was natural that the last wish of a dying, gallant soldier, like Sombreuil, who had gloriously run his career of life, should be to exculpate himself from having any responsible share in such a shameful expedition. Hence he thought the letter was a public document, and nothing but a public document, and on that ground he stood to support the motion.

Mr. FOX said, he must confess, that of all the instances he had ever experienced (and he had experienced a great many in common with other gentlemen in that house) where men have changed their political principles and forgotten all their former declarations, he was never more surprized than he had been at the present language of the right honourable gentleman, and the language he had used upon a former day. That he should have received such a letter, and not have produced it when called upon, or even without being called upon to do so, was as extraordinary and as exceptionable an incident as he had ever met with. His objection, however, was, that he acted under a supposition it was lost. If the right honourable gentleman did act under that supposition, it was wholly unknown to him; for, till a few weeks since, he never heard the report. But grant he had, was it right for him, consistently with his parliamentary duty, to listen to every report he heard, and act upon them specifically? If that were the case, there would be no need of justification, since, whenever Ministers were called upon to produce any paper to which they might object, they would only have to state, that such an unfortunate circumstance as this had happened, and all would be as they could wish. Happily, however, the letter had been found, happily so at least in memory of Sombreuil; for if it had not, the



House and the public would have known nothing of its description; and how could they have judged from the given them, whether a heavy accusation did not lie against that officer who had been so desirous to exculpate himself from charge of having a part in the scandalous conduct of the expedition? If there was any one thing which that gentleman seemed most to deprecate, it was the idea of his share in that transaction. It was true indeed that no accusation lay against him; but, for his own part, he had expected that the principal officers were the principal actors. He always thought so, though he had no resentment against them. On the contrary, he felt for them, since they only added to the responsibility of Ministers, for the rashness and folly would be imputable in them, under their desperate circumstances, without regarding to the character and understandings of British officers, and he believed every man would be of that opinion. Sombreuil, when he found all gone, and had no farther life, still was anxious that his reputation should survive. He accordingly appealed to that letter as a public document which a right honourable gentleman was bound to publish. If he had no personal regard for the character, upon the principle of the word — *Necessitas*, he at least ought to have done himself the justice to declare, that so far from having any concern in that expedition, he did not know who had the command, what the amount of his force, or the place of destination. To suppose to appear something in all this that required to be explained, or to appear something that called for publication. If that were the case, what justification was there for having mislaid a paper of so much importance? He had never heard at what period the letter was recovered; but the moment it was missing, so much to the memory and dying request of Sombreuil, that he should find it, and some excuse for its being mislaid, should have been admitted to the House, accompanied with a recapitulation of the facts, as accurately as could be collected. Whether the hurry of business had erased the remembrance of it, he could not say, though he thought something like that excuse was urged by him every day. Nevertheless, he thought it very singular that so remarkable should totally escape such a retentive memory. A right honourable gentleman had been known to possess, and he might attribute this amazing and sudden defect to nothing but to his unhappy connexions, whose weakness that way was proved. He thought, however, that he should not have lost a paper, and in announcing the recovery of these papers to the House; that



seem he waited in daily expectation of a motion concerning them from the opposite side, so he would insinuate he knew they were lost; but because they knew not they were found, he delayed to do his duty. And thus it appeared also, that if they had not been wrong, he would not have been right, for he delayed justifying Count Sombreuil until he could find something in their conduct to blame. What system of honour or principle could justify this mode of proceeding, he did not know; for it required a most extraordinary mind to determine. Whether his honourable friend (General Tarleton) had heard of these letters being lost, when he first mentioned them, he did not know, but he believed not. Admitting, however, that he had, what was to be his conduct? Was he, because he had heard it vaguely reported that these or any other papers were mislaid, not to make the public business, in which they were involved, an object of inquiry? Was there any intercourse between them and the honourable gentlemen on the other side, or any sort of encouragement from those gentlemen, to incline them to such a proceeding? For his own part, as he said before, he had heard it loosely stated that these letters were lost, but then he heard it not till the period subsequent to their being found. The letter, however, ought not to have been mislaid, for it was a letter of most serious consequence, implicating the honour of Sombreuil; and the publication of it depended not upon what they considered its importance to be, but upon the express request and dying wishes of Sombreuil. To withhold the letter, was taking a liberty with other men's opinions, which he should be loath to do, whether they were living or dead; and still more with such a man, and in such a situation, as Sombreuil; and upon that account he gave his vote for the motion.

Mr. Chancellor PITT did not rise to prolong the debate, because he did not think it a proper time to discuss the Quiberon expedition. The honourable gentleman on the other side, as usual, had adopted strong phrases to reprobate that expedition; notwithstanding which he would take his share for the full responsibility; and whenever that subject came to be discussed, although it would be impossible for him to enter into some particulars, yet on the *prima facie* examination, he trusted he should be capable of giving them a distinct and decisive answer. The question now to be considered was, Whether there were grounds for the production of the letter? In support of the affirmative, it was alleged, that until it was produced, Sombreuil lay under a heavy imputation. He protested to the contrary. Nothing appears positively to shew that he had a share in planning the Quiberon expedition; and, secondly, it was

evident that he had no share in the mode of carrying it into effect, which was proved by the perfect arrangement of the plan which arrived in this country. That was not all; for if his motion depended on the publication of this letter, was not the letter as public as if it were laid on the table of the House of Commons? He suspected that the motion was merely made to gain time for a subsequent motion that ought to be canvassed on general principles. He begged leave to comment on one observation of the right honourable gentleman, which was, that the annunciation of the contents of the letter had been put off to entrap them. And now they succeeded on the right they had to call for it, which right they had justified, for now they had called for it. Now if they blamed the right honourable friend for not producing it sooner, why did they not delay the motion, when they were in possession of all the facts? They waited for a general motion on the expedition, in order to refer to this letter, by way of gaining stronger support to their motion from the sympathy excited by the fate of this gallant officer. He asked pardon for trespassing on the patience of the House, and at the same time all respect and regret for Sombreuil's misfortunes, of which no man could be more warmly affected than himself.

Mr. FOX explained. He said the production of the letter was not more necessary in the House to exculpate Sombreuil, than to inculcate the persons who advised and conducted the expedition wherein he lost his life.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day.

Mr. SHERIDAN declined taking the advantage of the motion, as the motion gave him of speaking again at length. From the manner of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) who had not claimed the privilege of an angry man, he should have thought the right honourable gentleman supposed that high words were not for proof and argument. He wished him, when he was next to read the letters over again, as he might perceive his instructions to be erroneous. He concurred with his honourable friend (General Smith) in the idea, that if Sombreuil had been in command of the expedition, it was possible that he might not have left England. The calamity that attended the expedition he attributed solely to the division of counsels; for if Sombreuil had secured his retreat, while the other brave commanders were left victims to his treachery.

The motion for the order of the day was put, and carried without a division.

The House then went into a Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Hobart in the chair.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was aware, he said, of the extent of the public burdens, aggravated as they were by a temporary scarcity of money, under the very arduous nature of the growing expenditure of the war, and under the peculiar circumstances of having so recently received from the country a most extensive, and as he believed at the time, an ample supply of money for the service of the year, he was aware that at the present moment an examination of the state and condition of our finances, industriously depreciated as they had been, and perhaps successfully depreciated in the eyes of the enemies of the country, was a subject of the greatest magnitude, and which demanded all the attention which the Committee and the nation could bestow upon it. When he considered that on the examination of this great and delicate subject, the essential interests of the country depended---nay, that its final destiny might depend upon the result, it was impossible to approach so awful, and so momentous a discussion, without feelings that he trusted would entitle him to the indulgence of the Committee, and he trusted that if he should trespass on their time, they would ascribe it to the powerful interest which the object produced upon his mind, and to the desire which he felt of giving every possible light and information upon it. After deliberately revolving in his mind the whole subject of the state of the revenue of this country, coupled with its commercial resources, it was with pleasure that he said that he did approach the discussion, with a sincere and rooted confidence that he should be able, by a display of incontrovertible facts, to give to the Committee such just and solid grounds of satisfaction, as should inspire the hopes, and animate the exertions of all the friends of this country, as well as disappoint the proud and presumptuous expectations of the enemy. The subject of the discussion, which he should endeavour to compress within as narrow limits as possible, would comprehend three distinct heads.

1st, The substitution of such new Ways and Means as might be thought advisable by the Committee, and as he should suggest in lieu of those proposed before Christmas, but which, upon representations that had been made, he had agreed to relinquish.

2d, The statement of such services as had not been foreseen, in providing for the services of the year, and in proposing to the Committee the means of meeting those services.

3d, The measure that he thought it would be advisable for the Committee to adopt, in order to remove the distress occasioned by the temporary demand for money, and in order to give facility to

commercial credit. These were the points to which he to call the attention of gentlemen, and from the discussion he was assured that they would derive the full and perfection, which he felt in his own bosom, not merely with the general sufficiency of the country, but also with the growing and unprecedented prosperity. Of the first, a sum the tax which it was agreed to relinquish. In the first Ways and Means for the service of the year 1796, amounted to about 1,220,000*l.* of this sum 135,000*l.* by an additional duty on printed calicoes; it was proposed to relinquish this tax, and he had therefore to find Ways and Means for this amount. In doing this he should not have occasion to propose any new tax. In the discussion which had taken place upon the subject that had been brought forward by an honourable member, he had suggested a difference from the original plan, that a part of the tax was to be applied to the use of the navy of the state; if Parliament should agree with him in thinking that was a proper and a wise measure, it was his intention to reduce the public part of the tax at 100,000*l.* a year. The sum might be raised by a regulation of a duty which had been for some time, and which would hardly be objected to on account of severity, he meant the tax upon hats, which had often been so grossly evaded as to require the interference of the law to correct the abuse; the fair tradesman, who in conformity with the provisions of the statute, charged it upon his rival, had the mortification of seeing his rival tradesman carry on his trade by selling under him and defrauding the revenue. Nothing had been produced by the tax for some time past; nothing had been suggested which he had no doubt would make it amount to the amount which he wanted; the method was, to put a loose stamp to be put into the hat, that the lining itself was stamped. An easy and practicable mode of procuring the necessary means would be provided, and a proper time for discussion of the subject would be in the Committee upon the bill. When the tax was first proposed, it was taken at 100,000*l.* the year it had produced 130,000*l.* it had however so fallen, that last year it had not produced more than 6000*l.*—By the regulation he had no doubt but that it would be restored in conformity to its efficiency, but he only proposed to take it as it was. These two means together, however, would be an amendment for the tax upon calicoes, which was abandoned, and he did not trouble the Committee with any farther statement upon the subject. The next part of the subject was of much greater extent

require a much larger discussion. He had to submit and explain to the Committee such increased charges as had arisen, or were likely to arise, and for which he had to provide, as not being included in the last statement which he had made before Christmas. He should, therefore, first state the amount of the services, and the mode of defraying them; which was also in some degree connected with the measure which he meant to propose in the exigency of the present enlarged demand of accommodation in the commercial world; that measure was to take out of the market a great portion of the paper constituting the unfunded debt, and by that means relieving the Bank from the advances which they had made, so as to enable them to allot a larger sum of money to commercial discounts; this operation would necessarily demand some increase of the public burdens, as they would have to provide for the difference between the small interest which this floating debt now bore, and the higher interest which it would bear on being funded: he would more particularly explain this in the proper place.

And, first of the services, there had been incurred since the 31st of December last, and not provided for under the head of army extraordinaries	-	£. 535,000
Of ordnance	- - - -	200,000
The additional sum required for barracks he estimated at	- - -	267,000
The sum for secret service, above the sum included in the last estimate, and above the sum of 25,000l. allowed in time of peace, he took at	-	100,000
And the sum which in the last statement of the Ways and Means were short of the Supply	-	177,000
		<hr/>
These services made together	- -	1,279,000
To which he should add a sum which he felt would be necessary to make good the farther army extraordinaries up to the end of the year 1796	-	1,221,000
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Making, in all of new services above the statement opened in the month of December last for the service of the current year, the sum of	-	2,500,000
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But there was another sum which must also be provided, and that was the sum requisite for the increased navy debt, which in every view of the state of the country, it was likely to apprehend would be incurred before the end of December, 1796; this he would make on a probable conjecture, from the amount of the surplus and ex-

pence of 1795, from the circumstance of the unforeseen delays which had taken place in the West-India expedition. The expenses of 1795 had exceeded his expectation in the sum of 1,500,000*l.* the same causes that had produced this increase, by having the transports so much longer in pay, the provisions and stores of every kind to renew, would also beget an increased expense under this head of service for the year 1796, to probably the same amount of 1,500,000*l.* the sum which he had taken in his first estimate, was 2,500,000*l.* so that he had now to reckon that the navy debt of 1796, would be 4,000,000*l.* towards this sum, however, he was provided in cash to the amount of 1,200,000*l.* and he should also have resources to the amount of 800,000*l.* more for this service; that, however, which now was wanted, would be a provision for the difference of interest between the sum which had been included in his former statement, and the sum now thought requisite; he explained that the amount of this interest would be on 1,640,000*l.* making the sum of 98,400*l.*; he entered into the detail of this explanation, shewing the periods at which provision for the navy debt had been made, the amount of it before the war, and its progress during the several years of the war; and he said that his proposition was to fund 5,000,000*l.* of the outstanding navy debt; or rather indeed 4,500,000*l.* for as the Bank held 500,000*l.* he should in the sum to be borrowed include that sum, to take out of their hands their navy debt to that amount. Another service was particularly that which would relieve commerce from its present embarrassments, and re-establish credit in the country, it was by taking out of the market as out of the Bank, Exchequer bills to the amount of 3,500,000*l.* and in order to do this so as to give the facility with promptitude, he proposed to borrow a sum of money to buy up these bills and to fund them; this would occasion an additional burden on the country to the amount of the difference between the sum which these Exchequer bills bore in their unfunded state, and the sum which the nation would have to pay for the annuity when funded. Another sum which he also proposed to borrow, was that of 1,000,000*l.* in order to repay the Bank a sum which they had advanced on the credit of the consolidated fund, on the supply of the year 1795, at which time the Committee would recollect, that in order to balance the Ways and Means against the Supply, he ought to have made his loan for 19,000,000*l.* instead of 18,000,000*l.* he had provided taxes for the 19,000,000, but it was thought advisable that the Bank should issue their bills to the amount of 1,000,000*l.* to be reimbursed to them as the consolidating fund should bring in the money; he now thought, however,



that in the present emergency, it would be more advisable to repay this sum immediately, than to wait for the gradual discharge of it by the consolidated fund, which was their security. It would enable them to give so much more relief to credit; but the Committee would see that, though he took this sum as an item in the loan, to be borrowed, it was not to be considered as an annual charge upon the country. In order to give to the Committee a perfect view of the present state of the public finances, and of all the expences that he could foresee, he ought to mention that there was one more contingent service that might occur in the course of the present year, the probable allowance of 1,000,000*l.* for bounties on corn, to be imported according to the act which had passed at the beginning of this session. At the time that this provision was made, it was hoped that we should be able to ascertain the amount of the sum to be required; fortunately we had been relieved from our apprehensions sooner than was expected; and there was every reason to believe, that the sum to be paid had been greatly over-rated: it was not now, he thought, likely that more than 300,000 quarters of wheat would be imported in the course of the present year, in consequence of the high bounty that the nation was to give; and he had the pleasure to say, that the greatest part of this grain would come to us from the recently acquired possessions which our arms had gained; and which, if we should be so happy as permanently to retain, he would be bold to say, would create a new æra in the commercial establishments and prosperity of this country. Considering the very material change that had taken place in the aspect of our own corn market, and the certainty of a supply to the amount, at least, of the quantity which he had stated, the minds of gentlemen would be relieved from all apprehension of a scarcity; and he had farther the cheering and comfortable information to give to the Committee, that even for this probable bounty of 300,000*l.* on 300,000 quarters of wheat, he had a sure and an ample resource without any farther demand upon the country; he had the happiness to inform them that such was the prosperous state of the affairs of the East-India Company, that even in the very first year of their new acquisitions, the country would be enabled to participate to the amount at least of this sum to be required for bounties. He had no doubt but that we might now look annually to the East-India Company for the 500,000*l.* which had been set down as the estimated participation of the public in their profits. To what farther amount the new acquisitions in the East that had been made, would carry those profits, it was hardly possible for the mind of man to conjecture in the present moment. The public

might with confidence look for very considerable aids from this source. These were all the heads of service which he had to submit to the Committee, and which he could foresee for the additional supply of the year. From these several heads then the sum to be permanently charged upon the country was as follows :

The interest on the sum of 2,500,000 <i>l.</i> of services added to those in his former statement, and including always the additional 1 per cent. towards the sinking fund, would be	£. 150,000
The difference of the interest on the navy debt unfunded would be	98,400
The interest on the 4,000,000 <i>l.</i> of navy debt	240,000
The differences of the interest on the sum of 3,500,000 <i>l.</i> of Exchequer bills above the rate of interest already provided for them	87,500

Making altogether the annual sum to be provided for

by taxes of	575,900
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And in order to make the operation immediate for the benefit of the commercial world, the amount of the money to be raised by loan, and to be appropriated in the manner which he had stated, was this :

The amount of the extraordinary services for the year 1796, was	2,500,000
The sum of Exchequer bills to be bought from the Bank, or from the market, was	3,500,000
The sum of navy bills to be bought from the Bank was	500,000
And the sum to be repaid the Bank, for the advances they had made in Exchequer bills, on the security of the consolidated fund, was	1,000,000

Making together a sum to be borrowed by a new loan of

7,500,000
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By this operation he meant to pay off the sum of 2,500,000*l.* immediately without having it as a charge on the former budget. To pay 3,500,000*l.* of Exchequer bills to the Bank, instead of issuing other Exchequer bills in their room, and also to pay them 1,000,000*l.* which otherways they would not have received till after the month of July, out of the growing produce of the consolidated fund. To fund 4,500,000*l.* of navy debt, and to pay to the Bank 500,000*l.* on the same account. So that in all, the sum

of 7,500,000*l.* was to be borrowed to accomplish these operations, by which, connected with additional aid to the public service, the state of commercial circulation would receive such advantage as would remove all the difficulties which had lately subsisted, not perhaps to the degree which had been industriously propagated and even exaggerated. That, however, a great and urgent distress had been suffered of late from the increased demand for money, it was impossible to deny, and the distress had arisen from various and very different causes; it was not difficult, however, to ascertain the nature and amount of those causes. The exigencies of the war were undoubtedly one essential cause of this distress, the sums necessarily to be remitted to the continent under the head of extraordinaries of the army, of subsidies, and of the loan to our ally the Emperor, it could not be denied, had been such a drain of our wealth as must be sensibly felt on the circulating medium of the country; and though the services of our ally the Emperor had greatly overbalanced the temporary disadvantage of this drain, yet the existence of the fact had no doubt contributed to the scarcity which had been felt. These, however, were not all the causes of the late demand; there were others which every gentleman would contemplate with satisfaction, and in the view of which our distress was connected with the prosperity of the country. In comparing the extent of our commerce for the last year, with that of the trade of 1792, the greatest and most prosperous year of peace that was ever known in the History of England, it would be found that it had greatly exceeded it in every way. It was therefore natural that the great extension of our commerce, the advancement of every species of manufacture, the improvement in agriculture, the great undertakings in canals and other establishments, and the speculations of every kind which had carried our commerce to so extraordinary a height, as in the third year of a war, to exceed the highest year of peace, would demand a larger assistance and accommodation of credit, in addition to our capital, than at any former time. This cause of an increased demand, though it may have had the aspect of distress, was clearly connected with the permanent prosperity of the empire. Though the drain of our wealth had for a time turned the exchanges of Europe against us, yet, already had the natural vigour of our capital and commerce restored to us the advantage of the exchange, and the flood-gates of wealth being re-opened, specie would flow back to us with more rapidity than it had gone forth. —Another cause why money had of late been withdrawn from commerce, although it had not been withdrawn from the kingdom, was this: From the quantity of unfunded debt floating in the

market, Exchequer bills had borne a discount, which tempted men, who had been in the habit of lending money for the accommodation of trade, to lay it out in the purchase of these bills. By taking them out of the market, it was probable that a large sum of ready money would return into the channels in which it had formerly been employed. It was also obvious that the public funds of the country, since they had found their level, were a receptacle for all the surplus wealth, both of persons in the kingdom and out of it, who were not in the habits of applying it to the use of commerce. But by taking the Navy and Exchequer Bills, which were the objects of speculation, out of the market, all that sum of floating money in the metropolis, which used to be so beneficially employed in commercial aids, would be restored to that use; while all that part of the unfunded debt which was held by the Bank, and which made it necessary for them to diminish their discounts in proportion to the amount, would be swept away, and the Bank would be able thereby to give so much greater extent to their discounts. He thought it necessary to go so much at large into this part of the subject, on account of the exaggeration which had taken place on the impoverished and exhausted state of this country, and of our utter incapacity to proceed in our exertions in order to secure to this country the blessings of a lasting peace. The effect of these exaggerations upon the minds of the enemy had been recently demonstrated in a way which made it incumbent upon him to prove the fallacy of the statements which had been made, and to evince to all the world, that so far from actual distress, or even temporary difficulty, the resources of this country were in so flourishing a condition, as to be the subject of pride and exultation to ourselves,---of intimidation and despair to our enemies. He would shew, from the facility with which we should meet the present demand, that, so far from being in an exhausted state, we should not even refer to any expedients of a doubtful nature for the sum wanted at this time---that sum, as he had stated, was 575,000*l.*; and, though he might undoubtedly take credit for 300,000*l.* a year on the provision of an annual lottery, and confine himself to the suggestion of taxes for the remaining 275,000*l.* yet, upon a review of all the circumstances of the time, he thought it a more becoming course to meet the whole of the difficulty, and to shew to Europe that we can encounter this addition of expence, without resorting to that measure which he had mentioned before Christmas. In doing this, he did not scruple to say, that one great motive was, to demolish the hopes of our enemies, and to shew them upon what miserable grounds they had presumed to doubt of the solvency of England! At the

same time, he must say, that he considered an annual lottery as an available resource to the country after the present year. But that, as well as other funds within the reach of the nation, he would, for the present, lay aside, because he thought that any mode which should permanently raise the annuity that was required, would have a greater effect than by resorting to this expedient.

The means which he intended to propose would not, in his mind, be subject to any serious objection from any part of the country, or upon any pretext. From recent experience he was persuaded, that an additional duty on wine would be an ample provision for the sum which he proposed to raise, and that it would be borne without inconvenience to the country. The considerations that ought to influence them on the occasion were, whether an additional duty might not be a temptation to fraud and abuse (which was a matter of prudence) or whether it might not tend to lessen the consumption, which was a question of finance. As to the first, it was an ascertained point, that, from the efficacy of the regulations since wine had been put under the survey of the excise, from the delicacy of the article itself, which never would admit of much adulteration, as well as from the difficulty, there was little to be apprehended on the score of fraud and abuse. As to any fears of a lessened consumption, gentlemen would not pay much regard to the objection; it would not be a subject of lamentation to the country if the consumption of wine should be diminished by the increase of duty, since the people might return to substitutes from which the revenue would be an adequate gainer, and that connected with the greater improvement of the country. He confessed, however, that in his mind, the addition of duty would not provoke the country to change their habits, or produce any material falling off in the use of the article. If he could judge from the effect of the last duty, there would be no falling off. It was only in the year 1795 that the additional duty had been laid, and from the operation of that duty it was possible for them to form a more accurate estimate than they had been able to do in the first instance. It had been proved, that in the course of the first twelve months after the high duty had been laid, above thirty thousand tons of wine had been imported; and this was not all, for the returns from the distant parts of the country had not been all received; and it was to be observed, that the duties had been paid on these thirty thousand tons, in addition to the sum paid upon the stock in hand, which had also been above thirty thousand tons. He was warranted, therefore, in believing that the annual impor-

tation and consumption would be thirty thousand tons a year. He did not think that it would be right to make the additional duty less than it was last year; it would only open the door to increased demand on the consumer by the Wine Merchant and the Tavern Keeper, if he were to make the duty less than six-pence a bottle. It was his intention to propose therefore a duty of 20l. per ton, which was equal to six-pence per bottle, with the usual regulations, as to double duty on French wine; and this estimating the consumption at thirty thousand tons per annum, would produce the sum of 600,000l. The same course would be pursued as in the last instance, with respect to the stock on hand, since it was very clear that the advance would immediately be made, by the dealer in the article, on the public. From the amount of the stock in hand, dating it from that day, the sum to be expected from the duty for the present year, would be between 8 and 900,000l. but he should not make any deduction on account of that surplus, but should leave it to cover any charges that might arise in the course of the present year, which he had not been able to foresee. This one tax, therefore, would be sufficient to defray the annuity required, to answer the services which he had explained.

The next point to be submitted to the Committee was the terms on which he had been able to make a Loan of 7,500,000l.

The terms as settled with the gentlemen who had contracted for the whole, subject to the approbation of Parliament, were

120l. of 3 per cents. Consols, taken out of the market price of the day, 67, which are	-	-	-	80	8	0
25l. of 3 per cents. reduced also at the market price, which was 66	-	-	-	16	10	0
5s. 6d. Long Annuity, at 18½ year's purchase, also the price of the day	-	-	-	5	1	0

Being in all - - - - - £ 101 19 9

To which, however, might be added the discount;

and as the payments were to be made more rapidly than in general, the discount was reckoned on the whole year at 2l. 14s. per annum; which, as they were to be all made up within six months, was to be estimated at

- - - - - 1 7 0

£ 103 6 9

So that without giving up the option which had been stipulated for, on the formal bargain of making a Loan for the Emperor for the amount of 3,000,000l. the present loan had been made at the



price only of 3l. 6s. 9d. above 100l. and at this rate of almost unparalleled benefit to the public, had the sum of seven millions and a half been raised, after three years of more enormous expence than ever was known in the History of England. This was a proud boast by the country, and was a glorious and unequivocal proof, that the false and unfounded expectations which the enemy had formed of our being at the end of our resources, were deserving only of our sovereign contempt. This was not the only test of the undiminished opulence of the country, which he had it in his power to exhibit, for he would shew that in every branch, and in every description of our fortune, we were at this moment in a higher state of opulence and prosperity than ever was known, even in the times of profound peace. He stated the amount of the taxes laid in the three first years of the war, to be 2,808,000l. and he recapitulated the receipt of these taxes, and shewed that they had exceeded the sum at which they were laid. The taxes for the last year, 1795, laid at the sum of 1,600,000l. had actually produced the sum of 1,684,000l. though the full operation of many of the taxes had not been ascertained, as they commenced nearly at Midsummer. This was a most extraordinary proof of the general opulence of the country, and though it might be said, that in this sum was to be taken the amount of the duties on the stock of wine on hand, yet as the whole effect of the other taxes had not been ascertained, he was justified in saying, that within the first twelve months the taxes had been effective to their whole amount. And what was still more extraordinary, as well as cheering in the circumstances of the present war, as being different from the expences of any preceding time, the production of the war taxes had not produced any defalcation on the permanent taxes of the State. By an average of the three years of the war, it had been proved, that the permanent taxes had exceeded the sum which they were required to produce to the amount of 280,000l. + Thus, then, in every view of the subject, we saw that the war taxes were more than equal to the expences which we had incurred, and on the return of peace we should have an exceeding of the permanent taxes applicable to any purpose that might be required. Our prospect on the return of peace was gratifying in every view it, for we had funds in reserve above the utmost extent of our peace establishment, to the amount of more than a million a year, as he would shew the Committee.

The surplus of the Permanent Taxes above the An-

nuity, &c. on the average of three year's war, was	288,000
An annual Lottery would produce	300,000
And the public participation of the profits of the East- India Company might be moderately taken at	500,000

Applicable surplus, after defraying all our expenses, of 1,088,000

It might be naturally expected that what happened in former wars would also have happened in this, that our commerce would have suffered a great and lamentable decrease. No such thing. The prosperity of our trade was equal to all the other wonders of the present time; so far from falling off, it had increased even amidst the difficulties of war. Our exports in the year 1792, the greatest year of our commerce that this country had ever known, were 24,905,000*l*.

Our exports in 1795, the third year of war, were no less than 27,270,000*l*.

In this war, unlike all other wars for the extent of its expence too, we had been able to borrow all the sums which had been wanted, at full one per cent lower rate of interest than in any former period of war; and we shall go out of this war in a better state in fact than we went into it, as the sinking fund, applicable to the discharge of our debt, will have received more than a proportionate addition of strength to the addition of debt which it has to defray. We had not, as in former wars, sought to lay all the burden on the backs of our posterity, but had more than borne our own proportion of it. By faithfully adhering to the system established for the diminution of our debt, we had provided for the extinction of every shilling that had been added to the funded debt of the country, and the sum applicable to this purpose, will be above 2,600,000*l*. on our restoration to peace. We shall nearly have accomplished that point, so desirable in the operation of the system, when we may pay off the five per cents. and in twelve years, the sinking fund will amount to the sum of 4,000,000*l*. a year, at which time the public will begin to be eased of their taxes, and from which time it will be only forty years until the whole of the debt that existed before the present war, will be finally extinguished. While at the same time, by faithfully acting upon the principle, a provision had been made, by which the debt of the war would even more rapidly be discharged.

He could not dismiss the consideration of this important view of our circumstances, without adverting to the impression which a contrary view of our finances and credit had made in another quarter. That impression, developed in a late transaction, in which the

pride, ambition, and insolence of the enemy, were so forcibly demonstrated, he had no doubt but the result of the day would demolish. The views that the enemy had taken of the state of this country, and the scarcity of provisions, and the temporary distress from the pressure for money, thank God! began to disappear during the very time that their proud and presumptuous answer to the application which had been made to them, was on its passage, and the proceedings of this day would dissipate the last faint glimmering of hope which they had cherished. They had thought fit to dictate the message which they sent to us on the score of exhausted finances; they whose finances were in a state which he disdained to discuss. He would not detain the Committee by inquiring into the state of their assignats, which had been so often the subject of examination, nor of all the various sorts of paper circulation to which they had recourse. He would only mention one strong and striking fact, which was a broad and candid statement that had been made by the French Directory themselves, to the Legislature on the 18th of March last. That their whole hopes and resources consisted in the circulation of their mandates at par, and that unless these mandates should be supported by penal laws, it would be utterly impossible for the Republic to continue their exertions. The mandates at par, or national ruin. Such was the open and frank communication of the French Directory in the face of the French people. The system of terror was established, and these mandates were put into circulation under the protection of the severest penal statutes. What was the consequence? The last accounts that we had from France proved that these mandates were at a discount of 2 per cent. ! Such was the relative state of the two countries, and such was the moral and instructive lesson which it held out. It was a grand example, and ought not to be overlooked in this age of restless innovation and of turbulent theory. It proved, that exertions, however shewy in their appearance, depending upon violence, bankruptcy, and imposture, could not be sufficient to contend with the regular and gradual supplies of a government preserving justice, credit, and integrity, arising from revenues flowing cheerfully and spontaneously from a people enjoying the blessings of security, freedom, and law! and that, however the convulsion of impetuous enthusiasm might boast for a time of the ability derived from the lavished sacrifice of its capital, it could not be a match for the steady, well-directed, and daily-refreshed powers of a Society not strained beyond its physical strength, and only applying to its struggle the growing surplus of its undiminished industry. By cheerfully persevering in this system we shall secure peace and inde-

pendence, on a basis not to be shaken by any effort that can be made on the part of an aspiring and ambitious enemy. He begged pardon for having trespassed so long on their patience, and concluded with moving one of his series of Resolutions.

Mr. GREY. If instead of coming forward with a budget for the third time in the course of fourteen months, if instead of coming forward to impose new burdens, and to levy fresh taxes upon the people, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had come down, stating the situation of the country to be such as to enable him to alleviate its present distress, and to relieve it from some of the existing imposts; if instead of making, if not an avowed, at least a real admission, that in the beginning of the present session he had deceived the House of Commons and the country, by misstating the demands of the public service, he had been enabled to say, that by a diminution of the necessities of the State, an alleviation of the public burdens was become practicable; if, instead of having blotted the annals of the country, and tarnished the glory of the present reign, he had added to the splendour of the regal diadem, and furnished an epoch of British history exempt from misfortune and distress, then the right honourable gentleman might have, with some degree of justice, assumed that air of triumph with which this evening he has so vainly attempted to cover his inability and misconduct. On this day of humiliation to the country, and to the House of Commons, I did expect a contrition becoming his situation. But whatever may have been the style in which his statements have been made, he has been compelled, by the vigilance of individuals, to come forward with an explanation, which the House of Commons never thought it worth while to demand.—The Bank, by withdrawing their discounts, has forced him to the declarations which he has made this day, and if no other advantage should be derived from them, he hoped, that they would convince the House of their error, in having reposed such implicit confidence in his former statements.—I shall not follow him through all the declamation with which his speech was interspersed; and I cannot help regretting, that in a business where a plain account ought to have been submitted to the House, he had so often recourse to the embellishments of eloquence. For the sake of argument I shall admit the flourishing state of our commerce, and the increase of our exports, for abundant means will by no means justify an extravagant prodigality in the use of these means. But in some instances his argument was fallacious. It is no uncommon practice, in order to prevent any mistake, for merchants to enter the goods which they export oftener than once; and when it is taken into consideration also, that the amount of the exports is considerably increased

by the expenditure of the war itself, his reasoning upon this head will not prove so conclusive as at first sight one might be apt to conclude. I shall not follow him, however, upon this general question, for an increased commerce affords no excuse for an increased extravagance; nor will it ever supersede the necessity imposed by their duty upon the House of Commons, of inquiring into the amount, and the propriety of the burdens to which their Constituents are subjected. I own that on the present occasion I offer myself to the attention of the House in circumstances of some disadvantage, after the powerful torrent of language which has now flowed from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of which he must be acknowledged to have such ample command; I shall however attempt to give a representation of the state of the country, which will certainly differ materially from his, but which, if it is not so favourable, will perhaps be more correct. The right honourable gentleman complained that exaggerated statements had been given of our financial embarrassments, and that these statements had dictated to the enemy that haughty answer which they had lately made to certain pacific overtures on the part of this country.— Upon this subject I shall not enter at present. I shall only say that the result in that instance was exactly what I expected. In the first place there was much reason to distrust the sincerity of the British cabinet; and certainly the manner in which the business was conducted, was not such as tended to remove any unfavourable impression which the French might have formed from the former conduct of the King's Ministers. Upon the reply of the Directory I shall say nothing now. If the right honourable gentleman, or any of his friends, shall think proper to submit the subject to the consideration of the House, I shall be prepared to deliver my sentiments, and to point out that line of conduct which, in my humble apprehension, it would be proper to pursue. To return to the subject of finance: If the right honourable gentleman means, in talking of these false statements which have operated much to the disadvantage of the country, to allude to any thing that I advanced upon a former evening, I will now appeal to the House, if he has not now demonstrated the necessity of what I then proposed, and if his conduct this evening has not been a fulfilment of my prediction. I proposed to institute an inquiry into the state of our finances; he has shewn that inquiry to be more necessary than ever. I affirmed the provision made for the expences of the year, extravagant and enormous as it was, to be inadequate to the demands of the service. Now he comes down and acknowledges the assertion to be true. But are we really in this state, that independent

members of Parliament, who do not chance to be connected with His Majesty's Councils, who have not the fortune to live in the sunshine of royal bounty, cannot come forward in the House of Commons to attack the crimes, or to expose the errors of Administration, without lying under the imputation of being actuated by sinister motives, and having a view to unwarrantable ends? Such a reflection was not so much an aspersion upon the individual as an imputation upon the House. Leaving these general topics, I proceed to notice the expences incurred since the opening of the budget, and the means that have been proposed for defraying them. On the tax upon dogs, which had been substituted instead of one on cottons, I have little to remark. If the tax can produce 100,000*l.* a year, I have no objection to its taking effect. When I consider the nature of the bill, however, which has been brought in, I am not very sanguine about the amount of the produce of the tax. One clause in particular, is ludicrous in the extreme; I mean that which exempts any person from punishment who may be found killing or converting to his own use dogs who have not paid the tax. If, however, the tax, in spite of such ridiculous provisions in the bill, shall be found productive, I shall be glad, thinking as I do, that it is a fair and proper source of revenue. I must confess that I was not a little struck with the estimates for unprovided services, which have occurred since the last budget. The additional extraordinaries of the army were estimated at 535,000*l.* and the demands for the ordnance at 200,000*l.* The expence of barracks at 267,000*l.* The deficiency of the civil list, arising from sums applied to secret services, at 100,000*l.*—And the estimated deficiency of the taxes at 177,000*l.*—Amounting in all to 1,279,000*l.* When I consider the extent of these new demands, I cannot help reflecting upon the time of opening the budget last year, and the circumstances which have since taken place. In February 1795, the Minister received a loan of unparalleled extent. In September he was obliged to have recourse to new and unusual modes of raising money. In December he came forward with a budget, in which he assured the House and the country that he had made abundant provision for all the expences of the ensuing year. Since that time no unforeseen necessities have arisen, no new demands have occurred to justify the imposition of fresh burdens upon the people. He then calculated upon the hostile disposition of the enemy, and the continuance of the war, neither of which are the discoveries of yesterday, and therefore cannot furnish any apology for the exorbitant demands which he has this day made. He now boasts in the Committee that he did not shrink from a clear explanation of the demands of the public ser-



vice, to their full extent, and claimed a considerable share of credit for his ingenuous conduct, in coming forward, and stating all the provisions which the different exigencies of affairs in the course of the ensuing year may require. The principle he approved, and the line of conduct he allowed to be proper. But the principle which was proper now, was not less so in December last, and the mode of acting which was right in introducing the present budget, should also have been adopted in opening the last, whereas on that occasion, he neither made any provision for the extraordinaries of the army, nor for funding the navy debt. This brings me to the subject of unfunded debt, and here the right honourable gentleman went into a large discussion upon the evils arising from a great quantity of unfunded debt; as if he himself had not been the author of the evil of which he complained. His statement, however, upon this subject, differs widely from one with which I shall trouble the Committee. After proposing to fund a certain proportion of navy debt, he would leave unfunded only 1,640,000*l.* He makes out this statement by calculating every year the extent of the debt, and providing for a part which he deducts from the gross amount; but the question is, whether or not the provisions have answered his expectation? I have a very different statement to make. In 1794 there was funded about 1,500,000*l.* and in 1795 1,600,000*l.* and on the 31st of December last, there remained due for navy services 12,335,000*l.* including 10,250,000*l.* incurred in the course of the last year. So that, though the taxes turned out as productive as was expected, there would be left unprovided for, instead of 1,640,000*l.* near 7,000,000*l.* This event, however, depends upon the supposition of the taxes answering the Minister's expectations, which I must confess are, in my view, rather too sanguine. Last year the tax upon the stock of wine in hand amounted to 320,000*l.* which reduced the net produce of the tax, exclusive of the stock in hand, to 312,000*l.*—In opposition to this statement he sets up, that the taxes have not yet existed a complete year, and that the returns from which the estimate was made must be short of their real value. But he reminded him, that if some of the taxes did not take place till Midsummer, others had commenced in February, so that, if he had only eight months of some he had fourteen months of others. I must confess, that in my opinion, his expectations of the produce of the wine tax, are unwarrantably high. He thinks that as much wine will be consumed as before. Upon the quantity of wine which may be consumed, every man is at liberty to speculate as he pleases; but I think it would be unreasonable to reckon upon a greater

revenue from the tax than was derived from it last year, including the stock on hand; the consequence of which must be, that a very small part of the debt will be provided for. The right honourable gentleman also entered into a statement of the probable addition to the navy debt, in the course of the ensuing year. I know not on what grounds he proceeded in this statement, as they must be essentially different from those on which he has been accustomed to act in former years. Formerly he used to estimate the probable debt of the ensuing year, from the known amount of the debt of the preceding year, and in these cases the fact always exceeded the estimate. How then comes he to estimate the navy debt of next year at only 4,000,000*l.* when the debt of last year amounted to 10,000,000*l.*? I admit that the peculiar circumstances of last year, might tend to swell the navy debt to an uncommon amount, but certainly these circumstances never can authorize such a disproportion in the estimate. If the right honourable gentleman had fulfilled his boast to the public, and acted with that manliness and fairness, the credit of which he claimed, he should have provided interest for at least 14,000,000*l.* So that even now, after all that we had heard of a superabundant provision for expences, some of which we were taught to believe had no existence, there was an out-standing debt to a great amount, which still remained unprovided for, and for the existing arrears in the civil list, there are no means of providing but by applying those grants which have been made by Parliament for other purposes to their discharge. If instead, therefore, of the high and lofty tone that he has assumed, the Minister had come down praying for a bill of indemnity for his errors, extravagance and misconduct, he would have acted in a manner more becoming his situation.—The army I know to be in arrears. The civil list is no less than five quarters in arrear; every department of the state has suffered from the mismanagement of its conductors, and now, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer has found himself compelled to make new demands, boasting as he has done, of having freely disclosed the utmost extent of the State necessities; even now I say, in this third budget in the course of fourteen months, he has neglected to make provision for acknowledged deficiencies.—I now call upon this Committee to go into an inquiry into the State of the finances; and if the right honourable gentleman, instead of fine speeches, will only furnish me with a few papers, I will pledge myself to shew that, notwithstanding the enormous loan of 25,000,000*l.* which has been voted, he has not provided interest for the out-standing debts. Before I sit down, I must advert to what the right honourable gentleman urged, in allusion, I suppose, to something that I advanced on a former evening, respecting the probable

amount of a peace establishment, and which I am now prepared both to re-state and to defend. I then estimated the peace establishment at 16,800,000*l.* to which, if you add the interest of the capital of the debt contracted since the war, amounting to 2,600,000*l.* 1,000,000*l.* for the interest of unfunded debt, some allowance for an increased half-pay list, and the expence of barracks, together with 200,000*l.* which I suppose will always be continued as a sum for liquidating the debt, the peace establishment cannot be estimated at less than 22,000,000*l.* Now, let us consider, for a moment, the means that we have to support this establishment. The net produce of the taxes, last year, amounted to 15,735,876*l.* which, together with the land and malt, estimated at about 3,000,000*l.* will make out a standing annual revenue of 19,000,000*l.* still leaving 2,500,000*l.* a year, to be provided for by annual permanent taxes. Perhaps, the right honourable gentleman may object to my taking the estimate of the produce of the taxes from a year of war. But the objection is entirely without foundation, because, instead of diminishing, the war has rather tended to increase the public revenue. At the close of the sanguinary and unfortunate American war, the revenue did not rise by the operation of peace, but by the accumulation of taxes, so that there is nothing either in history, or our own experience, that can warrant us in supposing that the taxes will be more productive on the return of peace, than they are at present. I have stated these observations to the Committee, not as has been insinuated to depreciate the state of our finances, or to afford to the enemy cause of exultation and triumph, but to induce the House, upon finding this admitted error *prima facie* in the statements and calculations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to institute an inquiry into the business, that they may see the real dangers attendant upon that situation to which the country is reduced. I must here also deprecate all comparison between the situation of this country and that of France, as such comparison must infallibly lead to error. Such comparisons have been the means of deluding the people of this country into a contest which has been conducted without ability, and which the present Ministers can never terminate with honour. I leave it entirely to the judgment of the House; but if they will go into a Committee of Inquiry upon the subject, I pledge myself to prove, that even now the demands of the public exigencies have been only partially stated, and that the interest of public debt, to a great amount, still remains unprovided for.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he would trouble the House, if it would grant him indulgence, for the purpose of making a few ob-

servations on those points urged by the honourable member, which he conceived of the most importance. Their calculations had differed materially; for, in the first instance, the honourable gentleman asserted that the navy debt, incurred in 1795, amounted to ten millions. Instead of such increase, he maintained that the sum incurred for that period amounted only to something more than six millions; by this account, the honourable gentleman was in error at least three millions, for the interest of which he insisted that provision had been made. On the 31st of December, 1791, the total navy debt was 2,300,000*l*. At the end of 1795 the debt amounted to 12,000,000*l*. This certainly made a difference of near 10,000,000*l*. But it is impossible and absurd to suppose that the whole of the latter sum was incurred during the year 1795, and so far the blame imputed to him by the honourable gentleman must vanish before this fact. The navy debt for 1796, he calculated at four millions; but the honourable member, drawing his inferences from his own statements, assumed to himself the fact that it ought to be double that sum; but this was a proposition to which he could not agree, though it were not impossible but there might be some variations in the navy debt, more or less, but not to an amount as great as 4,000,000*l*. In the present instance, he contended, he had adopted the right proportion.

It was utterly impossible, he observed, to do more than provide by general estimation, and in doing that, he endeavoured not to produce great inconvenience to the country. According to the forms of office, he had not been able to produce the returns for 1795 later than the 29th of September. But he must again impress on the minds of the House, that there were many circumstances which occurred in 1795, not likely to occur in the present year; for, leaving out of the question the expences incurred by the misfortunes encountered by the West-India fleet, there were to be added to the expenditures of the last year, the extraordinary and great expences occasioned by the purchasing and fitting out of the East-India ships, which made a powerful addition to our naval strength, but was not an expence that would occur again in the year 1796. In addition to this, from the prospect of the harvest, he had reason to hope that the article of victualling, for the present, would be much less than the preceding year. He denied that the new loan was for new services, as the excess of the expence to be provided for was no more than 2,500,000*l*. He next adverted to the hair-powder tax, and the additional tax on wine; the produce of these, he insisted, he took at the most unfavourable period, because at a time when the remittances were not made from the country, which he

could have otherwise brought into the account. The next point, to which he called the attention of the House, was, the prohibition of the distilleries, which occasioned a falling off, on an average, of one-third of the duties; but this accidental defalcation would be retrieved, and the duties, on the fair average of four years previous to the last year, were in a progressive state of improvement. The honourable gentleman mistook, if he conceived he stated that the 500,000*l.* arising from the East India Company, besides the 300,000*l.* arising from the Lottery, formed an ample fund for the increase of the peace establishment; that was a question he would not now discuss, and which, indeed, it would be impossible to discuss with propriety till the happy period of peace should arrive. He could not now ascertain what peace establishment might be necessary for the purpose of protecting our conquests and possessions abroad; that would be a subject certainly for future discussion, and all he had now to state was, that a million was now prepared for the peace establishment. He next adverted to the committee of 1788, and the subsequent committee; on this subject gentlemen were of various opinions, and, like combatants in a contest, when victory is not decided, each flattered himself in his own mind of having vanquished his opponent.

Mr. FOX said, he should not on the present occasion trouble the committee much at length. First, he must take notice that the people of this country were very fortunate, if they could believe the Minister, for then they would always be in a prosperous state. They had been stated to be in a happy condition when there was plenty of money in the kingdom; they had been stated also to be in a prosperous state when there was a scarcity. Therefore we had this consolation, that whether there be a plenty or a scarcity, we had a Minister who assured us that either the one or the other was a decided proof of our happiness—an unequivocal stamp of public prosperity. We had full proof of this from the speech of the Minister to-night, compared with what he had said on former occasions. That right honourable gentleman had observed, that if we looked at the balance of trade now, it was much in our favour. He said also, that in considering the expence of the present war, we should not conclude it to be more expensive than other wars, merely because more money was expended; we should consider that all the articles of life, the consumption of which must make up so great a part of the expence of war, as well as the price of every thing for which money was taken in exchange, was considerably higher than at any former period. Now, if this reasoning be correct, as certainly it was, it must infallibly apply to our imports and to our exports; and

some just reflections might thence arise with regard to our exports in particular. He owned, that with regard to our exports, he always entertained doubts of the accuracy or justness of the conclusions of the right honourable gentleman, when he stated them to the House. He would ask, Whether or not our subsidy to the King of Prussia, our loan to the Emperor, made any part of our exports? Did they, or did they not, make part of those very exports, on account of which we plume ourselves so highly? He did not know much on the subject. He knew nothing to the contrary of these making part of our exports; he suspected they did, at least in the calculation. With respect to the general topics which the Minister had brought forward to-night, he must observe, that this was not the proper time to discuss them; nor was it the most fit to discuss the merit of what had passed between the Executive Government of this country and that of the French Republic. He agreed with his honourable friend, and with him should be ready to deliver his opinion upon that subject, at the only time when that could be regularly asked of him, and when only his opinion could be serviceable to this country, when the whole of that subject should come fully and fairly before the House. He believed the period was not far distant when that opportunity would occur; he was sorry to observe, however, from what the Minister had advanced upon that subject, that it was by no means consoling; for while our burdens were rapidly increasing, our hopes of a speedy conclusion to the cause of that increase was now very much diminished; but this was also a topic for general discussion.

With regard to taxes, he was ready to say, he agreed with the Minister as to the principle on the wine tax, that an addition of a round sum would not be more burdensome to the public at large than a fraction would be. He agreed also with his honourable friend upon the subject, that it was not likely to be so productive as the Minister had estimated it; but as this was more a matter of conjecture than any thing else, he did not wish to say much upon that subject now. He thought the Minister had stated the difference between him and his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) pretty plainly. The difference between them was not five millions but three millions. But he thought that the difference between them, upon the computation of interest, was more than the Minister stated it to be. He knew that his authority, and the authority of others on the same side, was likely to be less attended to in that House, than the authority of the Minister, and therefore he wished himself and his honourable friends to be cautious of what they advanced upon such subjects as related to finance. Consequently they generally were so;



they founded their observations chiefly on the experience of facts, while the Minister generally took computations on probable expectation. He told the House what was to happen, from what he expected to happen. Whereas, Mr. Fox said, he and his honourable friends only presumed to conjecture what would happen, from what they knew had happened. Thus his honourable friend had conjectured what the produce of the taxes would be, by knowing what they had been; and then he had considered how much would be applicable to the payment of the present loan, after providing in the usual way for the sinking fund. The Minister was pleased to go into a calculation of the committees who had considered and made their reports on the finances and expenditure of this country. His honourable friend had done otherwise; he had taken experience for his guide upon this subject. He certainly was not wrong in the course he took; for before the calculation of the first committee came to be realised, another committee was formed, who differed from the first. A third might have differed from the second, had a third been appointed, and therefore his honourable friend was right in the course he took. Why did his honourable friend take the year 1778 for his standard? Because it was the medium year. But the Minister said, this was an extraordinary peace establishment. Was it not likely that such an extraordinary peace establishment would happen again? He would say that his honourable friend took a fair peace establishment, when he took the year 1788. It was taken as the average of four years, after six years peace. He should be glad to know what reason we now had to expect such a long interval of peace. God knew he wished it; but he could not cherish any hopes of enjoying it for any very long period of time, especially under the present system which our Government pursued. Therefore his honourable friend was right in taking the year 1788 for his calculations and observations. Had he taken 1789 or 1790, the case would have appeared more unfavourable still on our parts. He would therefore say, that his honourable friend had taken the subject as a man of his good sense must be expected to take it, upon facts as he found them, not upon the opinions of any committee, for the one of them had differed from the other, and, for aught he knew, a third might differ from the second committee, as much as the second did from the first.—His honourable friend had followed the moderation which he observed on a former night, when he moved for a committee to inquire into this subject. What he had stated to-night, was founded on what he stated then. It was founded upon experience. Why, then, he wished to know, whether there was a man in that House

who would say, that the peace establishment would be as low as the Minister had stated it this day. What did his honourable friend state the peace establishment of this country to be on the former night, supposing no farther expence to be incurred—Twenty-two millions. He would not state it to be so now; for by the vote now to be proposed, we were to add to the public revenue by adding to the public burdens, and therefore after this his honourable friend would make an allowance for what was now to be voted, when he talked of the deficiency of the public income as compared with the public expenditure. Then he might be asked, whether the measure now proposed by the Minister was to be applauded?—He would say he agreed to the measure of the Minister, and was only in doubt whether he ought to go farther. What has his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) done, when he moved for a committee to inquire into these points? He had stated the effect which the Minister's then system had and must have on the credit of the nation. He called on the House to perform its duty, by instituting an inquiry into the subject, for he then foretold what the Minister himself had proved to-night.—[Here the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, *No*!—“No!” said Mr. Fox, “I say it certainly was so.” Indeed, it was not then answered—there were many parts of his honourable friend's speech that were not answered. It was true, his honourable friend did not call for a new loan, because the House were not ready for that step; but he told them there was a large debt to be provided for, and that assertion had been verified this night. It was true, he was told then something of the same kind as had been hinted at this day—That he was endeavouring to depreciate the finances of this country, when in fact, it was not depreciating the finances of a country to call on a branch of the Legislature to attend to them. He was only calling on that House to do its duty. The Minister said, the statement then made by his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) was not now a fair statement of the expenditure of this country. Why, this was, what he always despised, a mere quarrelling with words. This would not now be the expenditure of this country, it was true.—Why? because by the vote of this night some part of that expenditure was to be defrayed, and for that purpose taxes to be imposed upon the public. This was a new burden on the public. This, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, was not a new necessity. True, it was not a new necessity; but it was a new discovery of the Minister's, or rather, it was an avowal of what the Minister knew and felt long ago must come on the public, which he did not choose to communicate to the public sooner. If the public were called

upon, as now certainly they were, to defray six per cent. instead of three and a half, was not that calling on them to bear two and a half per cent. additional burden? The Minister might indeed say, it was not new to him, it was what he did not chuse to state before to the public, or to the House of Commons. He was now disposed to state the fact a little more fully than before. He would say, therefore, that if the House of Commons had done its duty before, this business would have been manifested to the public long before. If it were requisite that they should go into the subject now, why did they not go into it before? Why did they wait until the King's Minister was convinced of the necessity of that which he says he now sees, and who seems to see a little later than others upon this subject, for he had only seemed to discover this necessity now, of which he as well as the House had been long ago apprised.

He had heard, Mr. Fox said, some things said upon French finance to-night, which he did not think very much to the purpose. He had heard a good deal said of the mandates of that country, in depreciation of them. He had heard of the depreciation of assignats, that they were at a discount of 82 per cent. and now mandates were said to be somewhere about the same condition, or perhaps at 84 per cent. discount. That French finances have long been and now are so deplorably situated, he was ready to admit. But he could not forget that year after year this country had been persuaded to proceed from peace, wealth, prosperity and security, into war, adversity and danger, upon account of the state of the French assignats as they were stated to be from time to time. These assignats, whatever might have been their state at some former period, were now annihilated. So may their mandates, and something else may succeed them of which we can know nothing. He should therefore hold to the House a lesson of caution upon this subject; for we were at present no nearer our conquest of the French than when they were issuing these assignats which are now annihilated. Being deluded once, the House should see that they were not to be deluded again—at least by the same artifice. Let us ask what would have been the situation of this country if they had not listened to the depreciation of these assignats? When Flanders and Holland were not in possession of the French, what would have been the difficulty of making peace with the French, compared with the difficulty which we feel now? Let us not, therefore, be deluded in the same way as we had been deluded already with respect to assignats. Let us not be dupes to the same imposture, and from the same impostors, from whom we had suffered so severely already, and that

the more especially when we find that the Minister has involved us in a situation so intricate, that he cannot guess at the opening of a budget, within seven millions and a half how much he shall have occasion to call upon us for in the course of one session of Parliament. These were the facts, and such the melancholy prospects which we had before us; and they were verified by the proceedings of this day—not by argument, but by what was much more forcible—a chain of events—facts and melancholy experience, for which we were now suffering. He hoped, therefore, this would have some effect upon the House. But we were now told that with respect to the condition of the French mandates, we had the opinion of the French Directory itself. This had not the advantage of being new, or if new, only so in name; the term Directory was new, but the substance of the argument had sufficiently deluded the House and the public already under the head of assignats. Much vehemence of language had been employed upon former occasions, to shew to that House the desperate situation of the French finances. We had been told then something like what we had heard to-night, “Hear what the French say themselves, and see whether they are not in their last agony.” We had been told, with a distinctness which was not very common in metaphorical language, “That the French were not on the verge, but in the gulph of bankruptcy.” God forbid we should fight a country under the hope, and no other, that such country was in the gulph of bankruptcy. Nothing could be got from such a contest. By such folly we had added to the capital of our enormous debt from thirty to forty millions in the course of a little more than a year. This was a dreadful burden on the people of this country in any case; what must it be in such a case as this?

It was a remarkable circumstance, and ought to create in the House some distrust and diffidence in the assertions of Ministers. These very people of France who were in the gulph of bankruptcy a long time ago, had made it necessary for the Minister to borrow seven millions more in the course of one session, than he said he had occasion for when he brought forward the public expenditure of the country. He considered the observations on the mandates of the French to-night, exactly of the same delusive nature as those that were made some time ago upon the French assignats, as evidence of the speedy destruction of the system of the French Republic. An argument which had cost this country so much, and by which it had been so fatally deluded; that no man who wished it well could look at without shuddering. He was led in his view of the Minister's speech to consider an event which gave him great pleasure. It was

matter of congratulation to every good man in this country. He meant the late reduction of the price of corn. But let us not think that the reduction of the price restored the people to all their comforts, such as they enjoyed before this war. The price of corn was still most dreadfully high. English wheat, he understood to be this day from four pounds to four guineas a quarter. Now, though that was a price comparatively low with reference to what it had lately been, yet it was a tremendous price still, and such as afforded us no reason to think that the poor were not likely to feel great distress. Besides, we should consider the price of other articles of food, particularly of meat. When we did so, we should find that the situation of the mass of the working part of the community was truly deplorable. It was such in truth, as to put an end to that noble independence which once constituted the boast of the English labourer, who was now obliged in a great measure to rely on the bounty of those of a higher rank of life. Thus it was that the real vigour of the English nation would be destroyed. This was a point which called for the serious attention of the House. With respect to the terms of the loan which the Minister had opened to the House, he did not chuse to say much. The right honourable gentleman was under a difficulty in that particular. We had heard him say much in praise of a loan by open competition. Now that right honourable gentleman either was ignorant of the real situation of this country, when he made the last loan, or else he had acted with his eyes open, and only endeavoured to impose upon the public by imposing upon the House of Commons—for he had made this loan without competition. So he did the last. So, indeed, with all his affected attachment to open competition, he had done most of his loans of late, for not one fourth of the money he had borrowed this war, had been borrowed upon his plan of open competition. Here Mr. Fox maintained that the Minister did not state to the House the money which the public lost on the discount on Exchequer bills when this loan was agreed upon, for in reality the whole of that discount was a loss to the Public, let the holders of such bills be who they might. Another point which he must take notice of, was the arrears which were due from Government to various officers in the different branches of the public service. He understood that even in the smallest pensions Government were in arrear.—Even the miserable pittance which was allowed to the miserable French emigrants, who existed from day to day upon that pittance, and whom we had so scandalously deluded, was not punctually paid. He understood that this paltry allowance had been lately withheld. He was so informed—he did not insist that his infor-

mation was authentic. It was easy to refute it if his information was erroneous. Had there not been delay in the payment of the army? And delay in the payment of the Staff, as he had stated in that House on a former occasion, and on which he had made some remarks which had never been fairly, or at all answered? Had there not been in all the other branches of the public accounts, and in which payment ought to have taken place long ago? Did not Parliament pass a bill for the pay and cloathing the militia; and was there not a day appointed in the bill for that pay and cloathing, on purpose that no delay might take place? And did not Ministers set the provision of the act at defiance, and pay at their leisure and convenience? These things he hoped would be inquired into hereafter. But now he would ask whether that House would not have done better if they had agreed to the motion of his honourable friend for an inquiry into these subjects, instead of refusing to go into that inquiry? He should indeed not only have agreed to that motion, but should also have returned thanks to his honourable friend for moving it. But now we found that nothing was to be done until the clamour of individuals became so great, that the Minister found it inconvenient to pass it by in silence. Indeed, upon this occasion he had heard, what he felt no inclination to doubt, that the conduct of the Bank had been very laudable upon the subject of our present pecuniary embarrassment. He would not say much on the insinuation of money being more plenty some time since than it was at present. That was a subject which was likely soon to occur again; and upon which it was not necessary to urge many arguments. On the opening of the budget before Christmas, he forgot one omission of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of which he was reminded by the speech of the right honourable gentleman to-night. It reminded him also of what an honourable friend of his had said to him upon that budget: that they had not heard the usual flourish on the course of exchange. Now the right honourable gentleman came forward with an account of the course of exchange being in our favour, and of exchange having returned to its natural channel. Now if the scarcity of money had been owing to the quantity of money going out of this country, that would reduce the course of exchange, of which the right honourable gentleman had boasted. He wished the right honourable gentleman to make out all he promised to the Public, and therefore not to promise too much, because, if he was often faithless to his promise, the Public would think that the more splendid his promises were, the more likely it was that he only made them to deceive the country. The right honourable gentleman had considered himself as entitled to great credit for taking



the three years of war as a standard of our income in time of peace, in the course of his calculations to-night. He admitted indeed that it was probable that our commerce would increase in time of peace, and he hoped it would do so speedily and abundantly; but he was perfectly sure it would not do so in the course of the first two or three years. Had it done so in the war which commenced in the year 1756, and ended in 1763? precisely the reverse. The years 1763 and 1764 did not increase in commerce on 1761 and 1762. Nor did the years 1783 and 1784 increase in our commerce on 1781 and 1782. Indeed it was perfectly clear, that war itself, from various reasons, tended to increase our exportation, and to increase for a while our manufactures, although it tended ultimately to destroy both, together with every thing else that was valuable in a country. This was evidently the case in former wars; and therefore the calculation which the right honourable gentleman made upon that subject was fallacious in the use which he attempted to make of it. There was another observation to be made, which was, that this mode of calculation which the Minister had made to-night was erroneous in another view; for all the causes which made war increase our exports, applied to this war more than to any other. Was that all? No. We had not only added thirty millions to our debt in the course of the year, but the taxes bore a greater proportion to the value of all the articles taxed, than they had ever done before; he did not see therefore, ardently as he wished for peace, for the sake of the wealth of the country, and even for the stability of its Constitution and the happiness of the people, that that peace would at once increase the revenue, although ultimately he knew it would. This was therefore a very serious business; for severely as the people of this country were taxed, they must be taxed still more severely if this Government was to be supported. Mr. Fox concluded with observing that the Public had a right to know what it was they were contending for, and what the real expence was of that contest, instead of both these objects being, as hitherto they had been, enveloped in darkness.

Mr. Chancellor PITT explained, and admitted that were there a real scarcity, an unfunded debt might not only be safe, but in some respects convenient. With regard to the advances made by the Bank, they were not of so unprecedented a nature as had been suggested. In the spring of 1783, and when it must have accrued during the administration of the right honourable gentleman opposite to him, the whole of the sum advanced by the Bank was not less than 11,279,000*l*. He had already stated, that the scarcity of money was to be regretted, as well from its cause

as its effects ; at the same time he wished to regard the subject not only in the gloomy, but also the favourable point of view. He had called the attention of the Committee to the extension of our trade and commerce, 'exposed as they were to the various risks and checks incident to a state of war ; but, when speaking with satisfaction of increasing exports, he certainly referred to the exportation, not of money, but of our mercantile commodities. With regard to the Austrian Loan, that, he observed, had been furnished, not in money, but by means of Exchequer Bills. The increasing commerce of this country, could not be accurately estimated from the Custom-house statements, which, in point of fact, fell far short of the reality, and in the same proportion indicated that which was favourable to the interests of this country. He next adverted to the argument of the right honourable gentleman, drawn from the decreased value of money, as tending to diminish the value of our exports, and observed, that if the common articles of consumption were dearer, so also were the more valuable commodities ; and that if articles of trade cost more in making, they sold for a price proportionably higher. He admitted with the right honourable gentleman, that an increase of revenue was not to be expected immediately after the return of peace ; but in a short time afterwards he was persuaded the increase would be considerable, and he was warranted to hold forth expectations accordingly.

Mr. Pitt next exposed the inconsistency of the arguments of opposition, when at one time it was stated, that the war was productive of the loss of revenue and commerce, and at another time we were told, that war was the parent of commerce, and that we must go to war in order to defend it. For his own part, he looked to an honourable peace as that which would best tend to the permanent increase both of commerce and revenue, for, advantageous as the demands of war were to some branches of our commerce and manufactures, they could by no means counterbalance the general evil arising from that obstruction to the free circulation of the capital of this country, which a state of war occasioned. Mr. Pitt then explained the nature and extent of the navy debt, and argued, that with 17 millions and upwards of permanent taxes, added to those which the continuance of the war demanded, the funds would be found sufficient to meet every exigence. With regard to the state of the French finances, he declared he had not argued from any inference of his own. He stated the express declaration of the Executive Directory, in which they admitted on the 18th of March, that the only resource left was in the circulation of mandats at par ; and yet, on the 10th of April follow-

ing they had fallen so low as the twelfth of their nominal value. He was therefore warranted in contrasting the ruinous state of the French finances, with the prosperous resources of this country.—He disavowed any intention to impute improper motives to any Member of Parliament; nor could he suppose that there would be found one gentleman who would wilfully depreciate the resources of this country, and the state of public credit, with a view to encourage the enemy; at the same time it was with pain he had observed such statements in the public prints as unavoidably held out the idea, that our resources were so drained as to give the enemy a sort of right to dictate the terms of peace. Mr. Pitt declared that he was bound, from every principle of duty, conviction, and regard for the interests of his country, to counteract the pernicious tendency of such insinuations. With regard to the arrears which had happened in payments chargeable on the Civil List, he regretted the circumstance, which he attributed to some temporary difficulties; but added, that the necessary steps would be taken to discharge them.

Mr. FOX said, he rose to correct the right honourable gentleman in one remark, which he had given as his, although he never had used the words, or could possibly entertain the sentiment. He had never said that war was the parent of commerce. What he did say was, that when an expenditure of fifty millions took place, in consequence of the existence of war, a great part of the money issued must revert, by different modes, back to the Exchequer, and thereby in one shape increase the revenue, though it was an increase of no real advantage to the nation. In this point of view, therefore, a peace must reduce the revenue; and this was not merely theory, but founded on facts and experience, supported by what was known to be the state of the revenue at the conclusion of the last two wars. He said, with regard to exports it was natural to suppose that in war-time the merchants over-rated them, and the Custom-house knowing that, stated them at less value.

Mr. Chancellor PITT had forgot one thing, which he wished to state—it had been observed that to the bonus on the Loan ought to be added the discount on the Exchequer Bills, which were to be taken in part payment. He must say that this was a very small part indeed, and was not in the hands of the Contractors.—500,000*l.* were now in the hands of the Bank, and it was not to be supposed, after the terms of the Loan were known, that they would dispose of them under par.

Mr. Alderman NEWNHAM said, he did not rise to oppose any part of the right honourable gentleman's speech, which he

thought did credit to himself and to the nation : what he meant was, to make some observations upon the Loan, though not upon the terms of it. It was to all intents and purposes, and contrary to the approved system, a shut-up loan ; and competition, to his knowledge, had been offered by fifteen or sixteen respectable houses in the city, but they had received no answer, nor any reason why their terms were not admitted. Messrs. Boyd and Benfield seemed to have a sort of claim, from the terms of the former Loan ; but, while they insisted on this claim for themselves, they denied it to others who had been subscribers to the former Loan, thus refusing, to persons equally entitled, what they claimed to themselves. He again said, that it was not the terms he found fault with, but the monopoly that was established contrary to the system of fair and open competition, and which was attended with inconvenience to many. He wished to know how long this was to last, and why this exclusive right to all Government Loans was invested in the present Contractors ?

Mr. Chancellor PITT regretted that the manner in which the Loan was made had given any offence, and stated the nature of the agreement which had been entered into with Messrs. Boyd, Benfield, and Co. in December last, by which he was tied up from making any additional loan, and that more money being found necessary before that time expired than was then expected would be wanted, he had no alternative but to close with the present Contractors, whilst at the same time he hoped that the monied men in the city would become indirectly sharers in it. The present Loan, as to the terms of it, was one of the few with regard to which he was the less sorry at having departed from the system of competition, in as much as there was no other set of men who had less inducement, from the scrip which they held, to raise the terms of this loan than the present Contractors ; and, whilst he avowed the purity of his motives, the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed his persuasion, that the terms of the Loan would be found favourable, under the existing circumstances of the country.

Mr. GREY, after remarking that the mercantile house with which the right honourable gentleman had formed a kind of exclusive connection as to Loans, was “ a sort of leviathan rising pre-eminent in the ocean, and covering the surrounding space with its blubber and fins,” condemned the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for making an insufficient provision in the last Loan for the current expences of the year, so that before the term of that engagement was expired, another loan was wanted, and a departure found necessary from the system of competition.

He declared he doubted much whether the right honourable gentleman might not want to make a new loan, and to enter into a fresh engagement with Boyd and Co. before the expiration of the present. Mr. Grey added that he was ready to acknowledge the Chancellor of the Exchequer had corrected his statement respecting the amount of the navy debt contracted in the course of last year, but thought that he ought to have provided, not merely, as stated by him, for the sum of three millions and odd, but for the whole of that debt, amounting to 7,600,000*l.* as well as for the interest of the growing produce of the consolidated fund up to July. With regard to the peace establishment he calculated, that upon the supposition of peace being restored within the course of the year, there would be a considerable reduction in the revenue of the country, with an increased annual expenditure from seventeen to twenty-one millions. He proceeded to remark on what fell from the right honourable gentleman, respecting the arrears of payment due on the Civil List, and to officers of the army, &c. "He acknowledges that a sufficient sum has not come into the Exchequer to make good these payments, and he thinks fit to call this an inconvenience; but (said Mr. Grey) I call it an imposition, as it is an express violation of two Acts of Parliament, and the Minister of this country who shall dare to apply money brought into the Exchequer for any other purpose than that voted by Parliament, deserves impeachment." Mr. Grey expressed his disapprobation of this fresh Budget being brought forth at this late period of the Session, when many gentlemen were gone into the country, and alluded to the reported Loan to the Emperor; he hoped that if a measure of this consequence was intended to be brought forward, previous notice would be given, and that there would be a call of the House before it was suffered to pass.

Mr. STEELE said, that in consequence of what had passed on a former night, he applied to the Barrack-master-general, who had given him this explanation; that about 243,000*l.* had been expended for barracks in Great Britain, 64,000*l.* for the Islands of Jersey and Guernsey, and the few thousand pounds remaining for various articles that could not properly be classed under any of the descriptions in the account.

Mr. SHERIDAN begged the attention of the Committee but for only a few minutes, for he would not enter at large on the various topics that had been brought under consideration. He would first observe, that the complaint of monied men, at not being permitted to contribute their share to relieve the necessities of the State, was a sufficient proof of the flourishing condition of our resources, and

left no necessity for eloquence to declaim on the contrast between our situation, and that of the enemy. They were obliged to have recourse to violence to extort a forced loan, while monied gentlemen among us, with the generous impulse of patriotic magnanimity, were rivalling the Roman Curtius, and vying with each other who should first plunge into the unfathomable gulph of the Sinking Fund. He alluded to the many financial contests that had taken place between him and the right honourable gentleman, and it was of importance that he had recorded his opinion on the Journals of the House. The right honourable gentleman, after having long attempted to delude the House, had at last come over to his opinion. Questions of finance were not fit subjects for declamation and eloquence. When peace was obtained, he would undertake to prove, that instead of a surplus million, the peace-establishment could not be under twenty-three millions. He stated the expenditure of the peace-establishment of 1783, at seventeen millions, and if during nine years peace it had never decreased from this, he had a right to assume, that if, at the end of this war, the peace-establishment was twenty-three millions, it could not be less for the next nine years. The long-promised day when the revenue of the country was to be equal to its expenditure, had never yet come, and he verily believed never would come.

Mr. Chancellor PITT went over the grounds of his former argument, that there would be above one million excess of revenue above the peace establishment.

General SMITH was surprised to hear so much said about the present state of the East-Indies, as affording any new or stronger reliance on the Company's paying their 500,000*l.* than we had before. He was afraid the situation of the East-Indies was not known, and he dreaded much from the discontents that prevailed in the army. If the regulations did not reach India before the forces that were now sent there, he would not predict the consequences which might ensue.

Mr. DUNDAS said, that when East-India finances came under discussion, the honourable general would have a fair opportunity of stating the inability under which he supposed the East-India Company to labour. As to the other insinuations thrown out by him respecting the disposition of the army in that country, they were all wholly unfounded, and he could not but consider them as a libel on those officers whose services the honourable general had so often extolled in the highest terms.

Mr. D. SCOTT said, the regulations had been sent out, and answers received approving of them.



General SMITH denied the fact; they had only been sent out in February last. He vindicated himself from the imputation of libelling the East-India officers and army, whose honour and interests, on the contrary, he would be ever proud to protect.

The resolutions were put and agreed to without a division, and the report ordered to be received to-morrow.

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, April 19.*

Mr. HOBART brought up the report of the Committee of Ways and Means, when, upon the first resolution being put,

Mr. W. SMITH stated, that he intended to have made some observations upon the terms of the loan last night, but on account of the great length of time taken up by other gentlemen, he thought proper to defer them till to-day. It was in the recollection of every gentleman, he presumed, that, after the last loan was contracted for, he moved a resolution of different import to that adopted by the House; and, to use an expressive phrase of an honourable friend last night, many gentlemen were dragged through the mire to vote for that adopted resolution. In whatever view he considered the terms of that loan, it was difficult to reconcile them with the terms of this, for he insisted that there was at least a difference of three per cent. between them, which constituted a bonus to the contractors on the former. Though the coincidence of collateral circumstances did not always amount to mathematical demonstration, they amounted to presumptive proof, and thence he argued that the bargain for the old loan, for so it was to be distinguished, although so recently contracted for, was half a million unfavourable to the public, inasmuch as three per cent. more was given to the contractors than another gentleman would have taken it at, and the bonus upon it was exactly three per cent. more than the bonus upon this. Now it was necessary to inquire under what circumstances both the loans were bargained for, that the profit should be so much more at one time than another. When the bonus was given upon the old loan, it was to be remarked that thirty per cent. was paid upon it, that it was free from all burdens, which circumstance uniformly tends to depress the premium. If the parties therefore who purchase a loan, give less for one in April than they did in the preceding December, it was necessary to account for it. There was an expression he remarked in the resolution—with a view to the magnitude of the sum borrowed. What was the magnitude? A premium of seven per cent. came out in the market upon it, without any rise in the funds, and with respect to the magnitude of the sum borrowed, it could only affect the terms of the loan. The ques-

tion then was, how far such a sum could lower the funds more than this? The magnitude of the sum wanted, within one, two, or three million, was known before it was bargained for, and every effort was made use of by the contractors to depreciate the stocks previous to the bargain. Long before the bargain was concluded it was known that a loan would be wanted, and it was known to be for about sixteen millions. It could not be upon that ground then, that the bonus was given. What were the grounds then? Was there any difficulty in raising the money? No, so far from it, that three parties were known to have offered for it if competition had been allowed. Was it on account of the state of the monied market at home? This was proved not to be the case, not only by the answer to the last proposition, but by the advantage being on the other side in favour of the new loan, when a great scarcity of money is acknowledged. Did it arise then from the prospects of finance? No! for the prospects were in favour of the Public, since at that time sanguine expectations were entertained with respect to peace, which now, comparatively speaking, were entirely and completely demolished. If these be the circumstances of the case, and he presumed no person would contend that they were not, every argument he used before, that a better bargain upon the old loan might have been made, was now confirmed. He might appeal to every gentleman, or rather he would undertake to assure every gentleman, since few of them, he apprehended, were conversant in business of this nature, that if Ministers had gone to open competition upon the old loan, they might have had it taken off their hands by the very same contractors on the identical terms that they had taken this. If the two loans had been bargained for in two different years, and had no connection with each other, the difference of premium might be allowed, but this last loan of seven millions and a half was the supplement to that of eighteen millions, and the payments were to be contemporaneous payments, or rather the payments upon the last loan were to be made in a shorter time than the payments on the former. By this means, however, the arguments of the difficulty of obtaining a loan of such magnitude might apply in the other case, they would not apply in the present, for the difficulties of paying the instalments on the old loan were increased by the additional instalments on the new, and *vice versa*. He did not mean to move any resolution to rescind the resolution proposed by an honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Douglas) not then present, but he conceived some better reason ought to be given by the House for having come to such a resolution.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, whether the honourable gentleman

intended to bring forward a motion to rescind that resolution or not, was in his own breast to determine; but if he were inclined to do it, he could not do so until the present motion was disposed of. What he had said, however, was no argument against the present question, but, on the contrary, it appeared that the present question was so good, that the other, comparatively viewed, was not so good as it ought to have been. He was extremely happy to find, that the merit of the present loan received the approbation of so nice a critic, and therefore since they were unanimous, he concluded the best way would be to put their unanimity into action, and pass the resolution. In respect to the terms of the former loan, he was guided in his judgement by a general view of the circumstances at the time. Whether he drew his conclusions from right premises or not, the House had since an opportunity to decide; but if he had not, he reminded the honourable gentleman, that all human efforts are liable to error. He had done, however, for the best. When he bargained to so large an amount, he was aware of the reserve of unfunded debt, and had some idea of an imperial loan, whence he expected the production of the loan would create a fall in the stocks from one and a half to two per cent. which certainly would have been the case, if His Majesty's message had not arrived at the time it did, and of which he had then no apprehension: this was the reason why he agreed to give the contractors a higher bonus upon the loan of December, and this made the difference between that loan of eighteen millions, and the present one of seven and a half. But if he had known beforehand that the stocks had shewn a tendency to rise, he should certainly have made the premium less. He acted solely on his judgement for the best, and whether he judged rightly, he submitted to the candour of the House, as he only rose to state the grounds on which his judgement was formed.

Mr. FRANCIS said, the transaction of the last loan had been sufficiently discussed, and he was sure that by this time it was pretty well understood, at least by the Public. He should therefore only offer a single observation on something that had just fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right honourable gentleman had asserted that, from a variety of circumstances then existing, he did expect that there would be a considerable fall of the stocks, from one to two per cent. upon the production of the last loan in December; and that, for that reason, he had yielded to give the contractors a higher bonus on that loan. Mr. Francis observed, that supposing the right honourable gentleman to have felt that apprehension, and not to have had the message at that time at all in

his contemplation, he had certainly taken a very effectual course to prevent its effect, viz. by the message. He then stated a fact, on which he wished for information and explanation—that two acts of Parliament have been passed in this session, to enable Government to issue 3,500,000*l.* Exchequer bills, to replace the same amount held by the Bank. It is now found necessary to relieve the Bank from this load, and money is raised by the present loan to pay off the 3,500,000*l.* Exchequer bills, which the Bank hold. This then makes the issue of that sum in Exchequer bills, according to the former two acts of Parliament, unnecessary for that purpose. But the acts remain in force, and having been passed this session, cannot be repealed. The Minister then may still issue this sum in Exchequer bills, if his necessities should increase, for services which were not in our contemplation, and over which we can have no previous control; at least he had the power; and admitting that in fact he had no intention to use it, still there ought to be a parliamentary restraint over the possible exercise of such a power. Mr. Francis then stated a fact which he had learned since he came into the House, and on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or some of the gentlemen near him, might be better informed. That whereas the right honourable gentleman had last night stated it, among the advantages of the present loan, that by funding or providing for three millions and a half of Exchequer bills, the market would be greatly relieved, and the credit of that sort of paper raised in proportion. He was nevertheless assured from unquestionable authority, that Exchequer bills issued or offered for sale this very day, were bought at the enormous discount of five per cent. notwithstanding the operation which he had before alluded to, and from which so great an advantage had been promised and expected. Was this a fact, or was it not?

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that there would be a difficulty in point of form to repeal the acts of the Legislature passed in the present session; but if any jealousy, which he admitted to be perfectly constitutional and just, were entertained that the Executive Government would possibly abuse the power unintentionally given by these bills, he conceived the properest way would be to select some mode by which the evil might be guarded against, and the mode that appeared to him to be most parliamentary, was either by an address to His Majesty, inserting a clause in the present loan bill, or by moving a resolution to a similar effect. As to the other circumstance he suspected the honourable gentleman was not accurate in his expression, or at least not accurate in his information; for he knew of no Exchequer bills that had been issued to-day, and he would venture to say none had been issued. If any

Exchequer bills had been brought to-day into the market, and discounted at the rate the honourable gentleman had stated, they must have been bills previously issued. And in regard to the operation which he had ventured to predict from the relief of the market by providing for three millions and a half of Exchequer bills, he had to observe that the Resolution to that effect did not become an act of the House, till it was reported; after which he indulged himself in the hope that his prediction would be fulfilled.

Mr. GREY thought it wrong to let the acts for enabling Government to issue Exchequer bills and replace the same after the relief afforded to the Bank, remain in force without some provisional restraint; and he hoped that, some way or other, either, as the right honourable gentleman had stated, by an address to His Majesty, a clause in the present loan bill, or by moving a resolution, that restraint would be provided. In respect to the other transaction, it surprised him, after 3,500,000*l.* of Exchequer bills had been taken out of the Bank, that Exchequer bills should be brought to market at such a discount. These bills, he observed, were issued to the office of Ordnance as part of a payment of the arrears which were due there, in the same manner as to every other office under Government, and afterwards negotiated by that office; and one of them had been purchased by a friend of his at a discount of five per cent. This matter he thought worth the attention of the House; and he should certainly include it in the proposition of inculcation of His Majesty's Ministers which he meant to bring forward so soon as he could procure the papers he had moved for, since, if they had not violated the letter they had violated the spirit of the law, by using that money for arrears which was voted for prospective services.

The other Resolutions of the Committee were then read, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Rose, and Mr. Hobart, ordered to prepare and bring in bills upon the same.

Mr. MARTIN recommended the condition of the French emigrants to the attention of the House, as they were not paid their small allowance.

Mr. DENT moved for the commitment of the bill for the speedy conveyance of election writs on Friday next.

Ordered.

Mr. SARGEANT brought up some papers relative to the army in India, which were ordered to be laid upon the table.

Mr. THORNTON gave notice that an honourable friend of his, who was at present prevented from attending by illness, intended to introduce some farther limitations into the slave carrying bill, when that bill came to be reported. The limitations he proposed

were to increase the tonnage of ships, and not allow the traders to employ more ships, or import more slaves, in any vessel, than they do at present.

The SPEAKER informed him that if the regulations were to be enforced by pecuniary penalties, they must be introduced in the Committee; if not, they might be introduced on the report.

*Wednesday, 20th April.*

The order of the day, for the second reading of the bill to prevent the stealing of pewter pots being read, Mr. Fox moved, that it be now read a second time.

Mr. DENT said he must observe, that the House ought ever to regard with jealousy such bills as were introduced to serve the interested views of individuals. He had heard assertions made on a former evening respecting the approbation of the Pewterers' Company to the object of this bill; but so far from this being the fact, he was instructed to say that that Company would have petitioned against it, had the full extent of this bill been fairly stated to them. In fact, he could not perceive what need the publican had to apply for an act of Parliament to refuse to carry his pots to the houses of his customers, as the remedy lay in his hands. This bill, in its operation, would affect the interests of various descriptions of characters. It would interfere with the city of London, who had the privilege of impressing a stamp on pots used in the city, and deriving a revenue therefrom; it would affect that part of the Prince of Wales's revenue which was derived from the Stanaries in Corn-wall, the pewter-pot being compounded of tin and lead, mixed with another composition. With respect to the assertion, that the publicans sustained an annual loss of 100,000*l.* by their having pewter pots stolen, he believed the amount stated to be grossly exaggerated; for he learnt upon inquiry, that the sum stated exceeded the value of all the pewter-pots in use, and that instead of 100,000*l.* the sum fell short of 40,000*l.*—The pewterers were but few in number, nor exceeding forty. If then he found reason to disbelieve the assertions which were made in one instance, he could not but hesitate in admitting them to their full extent in others. Mr. Dent declared at the same time, that it would serve to remove one objection to the bill, if the right honourable gentleman would bring in a clause to prevent pewterers from buying such metal in the mafs as that whereof pewter-pots were made, it being the custom with pot-stcalers to sell them to old-iron shops, and when melted into one mafs, they re-sold them to the pewterers. He said, it was computed that above 7000 publicans used these pewter-pots, and it was



their custom each to employ one person at least to carry them out to their customers; by this bill, then, about 7000 persons would be turned out into the world, without the means of gaining their livelihood. Instead of such a bill as this, Mr. DENT said, he would rather propose, that the publican should enter the names of persons to whom porter was sent out, and have his remedy if they were not returned. He had been informed, however, that the chief loss sustained in the article of pewter-pots was not out of, but in the public-houses. Were the working people to provide their own pots, or otherwise be deprived of porter being brought to them from the public-houses, the consequence would be, that, by going to drink their porter at the public-houses, they would be tempted to spend their money, particularly upon receiving their wages, a great part of which would go to the publicans, instead of supporting their families. Various were the lesser inconveniences to which this bill would subject the poor, as well as those who carried out the porter; he should therefore oppose the second reading of the bill, and if this were carried, should move that it be postponed to some future period.

Mr. BUXTON remarked, that if the bill was in itself a good one, it was less material, if it should even affect the revenue of the Prince of Wales. He argued in favour of the bill principally upon the ground of its taking away the temptation to theft. No less than seven convictions out of ten, at the last Westminster sessions, were for this offence; and it was surely a matter of importance for the House to use means to take away the incitement to commit a crime.

Mr. DENT explained, and accounted in a measure for the number of convictions for this offence, from the publicans having entered into subscriptions in order to bring people to punishment who were chargeable with this crime.

Mr. FRANCIS said, that instead of considering whose interests would be affected by the bill, the first question was, the propriety and justice of this measure. With regard to the pewterers, he certainly thought that out of the losses sustained by publicans in their pots, they had no right to derive a profit; but as matters stood at present, the more pots the publicans lost, the more did the pewterers make. He conceived that the House would never countenance a trade encouraged by the criminal act of melting down pewter-pots into a mass, and he could even wish for a clause making it penal for pewterers to buy that metal in such a state. It had been suggested by the opponents to this bill, that if it was passed, the revenue derived from porter might suffer a devaluation. This he doubted;

but were it so, he could not set this against the importance of the prayer of the publicans.

General SMITH was of opinion, that the Prince of Wales, so far from objecting, would be well pleased, even if his revenue from tin suffered some diminution, provided that good was done to the morals of the community; but with regard to the present bill, he was of opinion that it ought not to pass into a law; he saw no necessity to require it; he considered any thing like compulsion or interference in matters of trade or commerce to be improper; and in the present case, the House was called on to frame a compulsive law in a matter wherein those who are to be benefited may serve themselves by their own deed, without applying to Parliament. He owned that when he first heard that 100,000*l.* was annually lost by the article of pewter-pots stolen, he was alarmed; but he had since learned that the whole amount of such pots annually made in London did not exceed 25,000*l.*

Mr. FOX contended that the single evidence of any member was not sufficient to outweigh the statement of the publicans in their petition; with respect therefore to the assertion that the publicans did not sustain the loss of 100,000*l.* by the practice of leaving pots at the houses of their customers, he need only say, that it was asserted and not disproved. But suppose the loss did not amount to so large a sum, still it could not be contended that it did not amount to a sum very considerable in point of magnitude; indeed the petition was in itself a proof of this, because the publicans would never come to Parliament for such a measure unless it was important to them, and it certainly could not be important in any but a pecuniary view. He had heard objections to this bill, which were inconsistent with each other; at one time it was objected that this was a measure sued for by the rich associated publicans, and not by the poor ones. It was with the same breath objected, that their view was to draw poor people to the public house, that they might be led to consume more porter by company, and which takes place from such intercourse, the natural progress to intoxication; but surely nothing could be more inconsistent than such objections, because it was known that the poor people frequented the houses of the poorer publicans, and that the rich publicans did not wish for their company, their houses being resorted to by more profitable guests. The pewterers, whose interests had been urged as opposed to the bill, did not think proper to petition against it, and therefore he could not entirely credit that their interests would be materially injured; but if they were to be injured, it would be only in this way — that they would have a lesser quantity to manufacture, because there would be a lesser quantity

unmanufactured, or melted into a mass, and certainly the House could not pay any respect to those advantages which were only to be derived to the pewterers by theft and robbery. With respect to the objection that this bill was a bill of restraint thus peculiarly circumstanced, that it was a restraint courted by the persons to be restrained, and therefore the essence of that objection fell to the ground, "*volenti non fit injuria.*" The evil complained of was of a serious nature; three hundred persons had been prosecuted and convicted within the three last years; and was it of no moment to prevent the interference of the criminal justice of the country against so many members of society? The great view of the bill was to prevent crimes by removing the facility and the temptation, to guard the morals of the people by keeping them from little crimes that might be followed by greater ones; and thus keeping many persons in the innocent class of society who would otherwise be joined to the profligate and the guilty. No private agreement could be effectual; because the smaller publicans might be induced to depart from the agreement with a view of courting employment. Upon the whole, he thought the bill such as ought to go into a Committee.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG declared that he should oppose the bill going into a Committee, on the same principles which the right honourable gentleman maintained that it ought to be committed. Though the principles were the same, the conclusions which he drew from them were very different from those of the right honourable gentleman. The bill would operate in a manner fatal to the morality of the most industrious part of the community, by necessarily introducing apprentices and working people to public houses.

Mr. FOX explained, and contended, that a clause might be introduced in the Committee, to compel publicans to send porter to the houses of tradesmen.

Mr. WINDHAM considered the provisions of the bill as peculiarly severe on the comforts and conveniencies of the middling and lower orders of the people. Porter would, if the bill passed, be no longer brought to their houses and lodgings; and if it were brought, it would lose much of its virtue by transfusion into other vessels.

Mr. FOX explained.

The question being called for, the House divided on the second reading; Ayes, 15—Noes, 27—Majority, 12

The bill was consequently rejected.

Thursday, 21st April.

The LORD MAYOR presented a petition from a gentleman of

the name of Manning, Captain of a ship, which stated that he was possessed of a bill of exchange, of the value of 2000*l*. but that being drawn on a larger stamp than the law required, he was advised by council he could not enforce payment of it in a court of law, because it was not on a proper stamp, praying therefore for the aid of the House to authorise the Commissioners to stamp the bill with the proper stamp, on payment of the duty, &c.

The petition being read,

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that it was scarcely conceivable the Legislature should mean, when they passed the stamp act, in this case, that any instrument should be void because it was on a larger stamp than was requisite. He had no objection to the House relieving this gentleman in whatever way was necessary, but he should hope there was no necessity for it, and that the bill could be supported in a court of law.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR did not think that a court of justice would refuse to receive in evidence a bill because it was not upon an appropriate stamp, provided it was not under the value of what the stamp ought to be. It would hardly be deemed the intention of the Legislature to say, that an instrument shall be void because the duty paid to Government was higher than was required by law.

The SPEAKER observed, that the better way would be not to refer this petition to a Committee, but to let it lie on the table; for if it should appear that there was no necessity for parliamentary interference, nothing farther need be done in it.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that this was a matter of very great importance to the public. If redress could be obtained for this gentleman, he should be the last man to think of withholding it; but it really ought to be quite clear that a court of law would not receive this bill before the House proceeded upon the case, because, by proceeding as if this was an invalid bill, they would admit in substance that all those instruments which were drawn on stamps larger than the law required were as illegal as if upon stamps lower than the law requires—a thing which would be extremely injurious to a great number of persons; for he understood that many deeds were drawn on stamps that were higher than was necessary, under an idea that they were all legal. It would be a very serious thing to disturb all such deeds, and therefore the House should take care how they sanctioned the principle.

After a few words from the LORD MAYOR and the SPEAKER, the petition was laid on the table.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR presented a petition on behalf of the Quakers. He paid a very handsome compliment to them for their

unoffending temper and exemplary morals. The petition stated, that they laboured under very great inconveniences with regard to tithes, in consequence of their religious scruples, which they could not with integrity disavow; and religious scruples of all kinds, while they did not offend the law, nor affect the rights of others, ought to be regarded, and always by a liberal mind would be regarded, with tenderness and respect. This petition stated the hardships to which the petitioners were exposed. And mentioned by way of instance, the case of seven of their suffering brethren in the Castle of York, where they have been long confined, but with that respect to Parliament, which entitled them to attention, they abstained from the presumption of pointing out any remedy, they left that to the wisdom of the House. He should be content for the present with having the petition left upon the table. The nature of the relief he should explain on Monday next. He should not propose on behalf of the Quakers, any thing that might infringe on the rights of others. He should also bring forward on that day, another point which was not hinted at by the Quakers, but the necessity of which he felt from experience. Great inconvenience had been produced, and the administration of justice was often defective, on account of the distinction which the Legislature had made in taking the affirmation of Quakers in civil cases alone, and rejecting it in criminal cases. He had mentioned this to many of the learned judges, and he had the good fortune to concur with them in opinion, as to the necessity of doing away that distinction, and of taking the affirmation of the Quakers, in criminal as well as in civil cases.

The petition being read, was ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR then gave notice that on Monday next he would move for leave to bring in a bill for the farther relief of the Quakers in the cases of their religious scruples, and also to make their affirmation admissible in criminal cases.

General SMITH gave notice that he should on Monday next move that the proceedings of the court martial on Mr. Cawthorne should be taken into consideration, and then appoint a day for Mr. Cawthorne to attend in his place in that House.

The bill for the better regulating the duty on hats was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he would dare say this bill contained many ingenious devices for the enforcing payment of this duty, but when any burden was to be laid upon the public, he wished to attend to the provisions of a bill. He should, therefore, move that this bill be printed, upon the principle upon which he had always

made similar motions, that the people ought to know the nature and extent of the burdens that they are called upon to support.

Mr. Chancellor PITT had no objections to the motion; he voted for it however, upon a different principle from the honourable gentleman, not because it was a tax bill, which it was not usual to print, but because it was a bill of regulation, with respect to a tax already existing, the provisions of which ought to be publicly known. It was certainly some consideration also, that if the bill was to be printed, he could not have the same reason to hope for the honourable gentleman's assistance, though really, in consenting to its being printed, he was sorry to say he was not sanguine in his expectations from that quarter.

Mr. SHERIDAN replied, that if the right honourable gentleman was so desirous of having his assistance now, he was surprised that he was not more grateful when he used to receive it oftener than he had lately done.—The right honourable gentleman said, that he consented to the bill being printed, upon the ground of its being a bill of regulation. He begged leave to remind him, however, that if he had consented to the tax bill being printed, these regulations might have been rendered unnecessary; but finding the purpose for which it was passed not fully answered, he now chose to record his own blunder, and to print the remedy.

The landed succession tax bill was brought up and read a first time.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was his wish to follow the same course in carrying this bill through the House, that he had done in the legacy tax bill, which was to have the bill read a second time and committed, and then printed. The bill was ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS, preparatory to his laying before the House his annual statement of the affairs of India, moved, that the following papers be laid upon the table:

An account of the Stock, exclusive of the capital, of the East-India Company, from the 31st of March, 1795, to the 31st of March, 1796.

An account of the amount of all the goods sold at the East-India Company's sales, from the 31st of March, 1795, to the 31st of March, 1796.

An account of the amount of all the sales of the East India Company's goods, from March 1795 to March 1796, charging the profit on freight, trade, and customs, compared with their average profits in the year preceding, February, 1794.

He moved for the accounts, to shew that the regulations which



had been made in favour of the East-India officers would not entrench upon the claims of the public for their charge upon the Company.

The accounts were ordered to be laid before the House.

Mr. FOX moved, that there be laid upon the table an account of the navy, victualling, and transport bills, registered since the 31st of December, 1795.

Ordered.

Mr. GREY moved, that there be laid before the House, an account of all the money issued upon account of temporary barracks from the 31st of June 1792, to the 31st of December 1795.

Ordered.

General SMITH moved for an account of all the sums paid by the East-India Company to Government, of the 500,000*l.* with which they were annually charged, and of the balance at present due upon their account to the public.

Ordered.

Mr. SHERIDAN moved that the adjourned debate, on the papers for which he moved on a former night, respecting the war in the West Indies, be now resumed.

The SPEAKER said that a motion being made on a former night, that there be laid before the House copies of the contracts made in the year 1794 and 1795, for the shipping taken up from the East-India Company, to be employed in conveying troops to the West Indies, and a debate having arisen thereon, the question he had to put was, that the debate be now resumed; which was agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he doubted whether he had any right to say any thing to the honourable gentleman's motion for these papers, except that he should not vote for laying them before the House, as he had on the former night delivered his sentiments upon the question.

The SPEAKER observed, that in point of strict order a gentleman had no right to speak twice upon one question in an adjourned debate, any more than in another debate; but he thought it his duty to state to the House, there were instances in which the strictness of this order had not been complied with.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he opposed the production of the papers which the honourable gentleman had called for, on the general ground that unless some proof was given of the particular necessity of an inquiry into the whole conduct of administration in that respect, the granting the papers would be superfluous. Some general reason should always be given of the necessity of inquiry,

to balance the inconvenience of complying with motions of this sort.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, he was considerably surprised that the Minister should make such an attempt to prevent the discussion of this subject. The Minister had said to-night, that he had already made a speech against granting these papers to the House. He could not recollect any thing that was said by the right honourable gentleman upon this subject that looked like an argument. When the subject was before the House, he said the debate should be adjourned, in order that it might be debated, and now it was brought forward, he said he would not consent to granting the information that was desired. This was all the argument of the right honourable gentleman. He understood that the Minister wanted time to prepare himself for this matter. He had that time, for the debate was adjourned; but he had made very bad use of his time, for he had now nothing to say, except that he was not in the humour to give the House any information on the subject. This was part of the Minister's plan. There had, of late, been some endeavours which had been hitherto much too successful, to introduce into that House a very novel and a very bad practice, by which the Minister superseded the inquisitorial power of that House; it was to refuse to the House all means of preliminary information, when on the face of the matter there was ground for inquiry into his conduct, and when perhaps the result of that inquiry would be his own complete disgrace. This practice was intirely unknown to former Parliaments, and contrary to the established practice of the House of Commons; but it would be a very convenient thing to the Minister if he could establish this novel practice; for it tended to conceal his blunders, and to prevent the House from recording his incapacity. We should find that it was the constant practice of Parliament in all former wars, when such information was moved for, to grant it in the first instance. This was the constant practice of Lord North during the American War. No papers were then withheld from the House, except such as by their publication might create danger to the Government, or to the public: and such no man of sense would ever wish to be published. But the reverse was the case with the present Minister; for he made it a standing rule to refuse every paper, except there was some proof that an inquiry ought to follow the information, and that there was ground to charge Administration with misconduct. With the present Minister, therefore, granting a paper which conveyed any information was the same thing as granting an inquiry. But in reality it was no such thing; he was

not bound to move for an inquiry after these papers were granted ; and that for the plainest of all reasons, for the papers when they appeared, might intirely justify the Minister in his conduct throughout the transactions to which the papers relate ; and therefore it was the interest of the Minister, if he was conscious he had acted well, to be eager to produce these papers. This war was said to be different from any other in which this country had ever been engaged. Certainly the manner in conducting it would lead us to think so ; and the manner in which information was refused in this war, was very different from what had ever taken place before. This was the only war in which the misconduct of Ministers was never to be made the subject of inquiry. Nay, there was not even an attempt to be made in a British House of Commons to inquire into the misconduct of Ministers in this war. They claimed an exemption from all inquiry exactly in proportion to their incapacity. The Minister said, " I will not grant you papers ; move your inquiry." Now his answer was this, he could not tell whether it would be necessary to move for an inquiry until he had seen these papers. But the Minister, although he would neither grant an inquiry, nor any information which might lead to it, yet he would grant what he called a *discussion*. Mr. Sheridan said he had come forward with a statement founded, perhaps, upon rumour, and desired information ; he therefore moved for such papers as were calculated to afford that information. The Minister started up and contradicted every word he said, but refused the information he desired ; and then said, now you have had a full *discussion* of the subject. This was the Minister's constant practice ; but what integrity was there in it ? How could the public be satisfied with such behaviour ? what proof had they, unless they took the Minister's own word in his own favour for satisfactory proof, that the affairs of Government are properly conducted ? Last session he brought this subject forward ; he was told by the Minister he lamented that the lateness of the session prevented him from agreeing to an inquiry ; there was nothing he desired so much, for that he was persuaded it would redound to the honour of His Majesty's servants ; if, therefore, it should be moved this session, he should be glad to assent to it. How stood the matter now ? The motion is made and the Minister opposes it. Now he would ask if there was one man in that House who would stand up and say that there was no reason to apprehend there was any blame whatever imputable to those who have had the conduct of the war, or in the expedition to the West-Indies ? Would any man say so, when he recollected what had happened after that brave, gallant, and, admi-

nable officer, Sir Charles Grey, left the West-Indies?—after his brilliant conquests there? He believed there was no man, even among the Minister's friends, hardy enough to make that assertion. How had Sir Charles Grey been treated by the King's Ministers? From the hour he left England to the hour he returned in 1794, not one man of reinforcement had been sent to him to the Leeward Islands. He believed not a single man. Of this he did not speak with absolute certainty, but he believed not one man had been sent. If he was misinformed upon this subject, it was in the Minister's power, and it was the Minister's duty, to refute him. Now, if in consequence of this negligence of Ministers, we had lost the greatest part of the conquests of Sir Charles Grey; if, from the delay of equipments in 1794, men had been kept in floating pest-houses until they perished by disease; if by a culpable, scandalous, murderous negligence of Ministers all this had happened, and he was ready to prove it had, was that, or was it not, matter for the inquiry of that House? Most assuredly it was; but how were these things to be inquired into before the proper documents were on the table of the House?

Here Mr. Sheridan took a general view of what happened with respect to Admiral Christian's squadron, and contended there was much and very culpable neglect on the part of Ministers. But instead of allowing an inquiry, they resented the idea of it. This was the modern practice of Administration. It was illustrated completely in the conduct of the Secretary at War the other day, when the letter of the Count de Sombreuil was called for. He said, we would not consent to lay it before the House, because it was called for under an idea that an injurious opinion had been said to be formed of him (Mr. Windham,) in consequence of that letter. Thus the resentment of the right honourable gentleman, and his unwillingness to indulge the House with any information, had made him forget the whole tenor of the letter. He had said it was intirely a private affair, whereas it contained not one word on any but public affairs.—Here Mr. Sheridan condemned in a very severe manner the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers towards that brave and unfortunate officer, whom, he said, they had totally deluded, else he would not have proceeded on the service in which he was sacrificed. Should the proper information be granted him upon this point, he would pledge himself to make out such a charge against the Minister as would justify an impeachment against him. He did not now say he could prove where the whole of the misconduct lay, but there was prodigious misconduct somewhere with respect to this expedition to Quilberon; and the purpose of part of

this motion was, to discover the source of that misconduct. Nor was there any thing new in calling for this sort of inquiry. If a Captain lost a ship, it was matter of course to try him by a court-martial, whether he was really to blame or not, and so the case should be with regard to Ministers. This was a scandalously planned expedition, and an inquiry ought to be instituted into it. Ministers were not so tender in the case of others as they were with themselves with regard to inquiries. They had caused that gallant officer, Admiral Cornwallis, to be tried by a court-martial for not shifting his flag and proceeding to the West-Indies. There had occurred no disobedience of orders, but a misunderstanding merely. He did not say they were not right in instituting this trial, although the effect of it was a little whimsical. The sentence was curious, for it stated that that able and gallant officer had done both right and wrong. He said that blame was imputable to him, but no censure merited. This he stated to shew the readiness Ministers had to accuse others, and consequently it was not very gracious to them to resent the idea of being themselves accused. He should now proceed to state to the House the motions which he intended to make as mere preliminary matter; for he would, if they were granted, follow them up with solemn accusations against Ministers. The motions were to this effect:

That an account be laid before the House of the number of men destined for the expedition to the West-Indies, under Sir C. Grey, at the close of the year 1793.

That an account be laid before the House of the number of men withdrawn from that service, in order to form an expedition to the coast of France, under Lord Moira.

An account of the number of men, who after the conquest of Martinique, St. Lucie, and Guadaloupe, were detached to St. Domingo, by Sir Charles Grey, in obedience to orders from home.

That the different applications made by the several Commanders in Chief for reinforcements, since the appointment of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, be laid before this House, or such parts of the same as can with safety be communicated.

That returns be laid before the House of the several reinforcements which actually arrived in the West-Indies during that period, specifying the distribution of the force, and the dates when they arrived.

That an account be laid before this House of the number of men which have been sent to St. Domingo from the commencement of the war, specifying the places from whence they were sent, and the dates when they arrived.

That the appointment of Sir Ralph Abercrombie to the command in the West-Indies be laid before the House.

That the number of regiments ordered, specifying what regiments, on the expedition under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, be laid before the House.

That General Doyle's appointment, and the regiments ordered to serve under him, be laid before the House.

That there be laid before the House, extracts of all letters from Admiral Christian and General Abercrombie, from the date of their appointment, respecting the delay of the sailing of the expedition.

That there be laid before the House, a return of the number of ships foundered or missing, and the number of men lost or missing belonging to the expedition under General Abercrombie.

That a return be laid before the House of the number of officers and men lost by disease in the West-Indies since the arrival of Sir Charles Grey to the end of last year, specifying the loss sustained in each regiment.

That there be laid before the House an account of the number of men who died on board transports at Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, or in ports of Great Britain or Ireland, destined for the West-Indies, in the years 1794, and 1795.

Copies or extracts of letters or memorials on this subject from the officers commanding the troops on board the said transports, from the Mayor of Plymouth, or from Lord George Lenox, governor of Plymouth garrison.

Extracts of all letters from Sir Ralph Abercrombie and Admiral Christian, respecting the delays of the expedition under their command.

Copy of His Majesty's letter of service, appointing a particular Board for the conduct of the transport service.

Copy of the correspondence between the said Board, his Majesty's Secretary at War, and the Board of Ordnance, respecting the West-India expedition.

An account of the total expence incurred in the transport service for the West-India expedition, in the years 1794 and 1795.

An account of all hospital stores sent to the West-Indies for His Majesty's service, in the years 1794 and 1795, specifying the ships in which they were sent.

A copy of a Proclamation issued in the name of His Majesty, in St. Domingo, signed Parker and Forbes, and dated Mole St. Nicholas, December 10.



An account of the number of men serving in England, under the command of the Earl of Moira, in the years 1794 and 1795.

An account of the French regiments raised and embodied in England, in the years 1794 and 1795, distinguishing the number of men in each regiment, and stating the services on which they have been employed.

Having read these motions, he proceeded to comment on the circumstances that rendered each of them necessary, in the course of which he took a view of the whole conduct of the West-India expedition; the neglect of the equipment; the cruel manner in which the troops were treated; they were allowed to perish for want of care being taken of them at our own ports; the manner in which remonstrances had been made to Government by the officer at Portsmouth, and by Lord George Lenox; the inattention of Ministers to these remonstrances; the deplorable condition of the troops in the West Indies, in consequence of excessive fatigue, and the want of reinforcement; their want of proper clothing, and particularly their want of shoes, in consequence of which they were known to have moistened the burning sand with blood streaming from their feet while they were on duty; the lamentable mortality among them, some regiments having lost two-thirds of their number for want of medicines; the madness of the expedition to Quiberon and Isle Dieu, whither we had sent scare-crow regiments; had ransacked all the jails in the kingdom for soldiers; and, if we had not robbed, we had defrauded the gibbet. Did not the House conceive that some explanation was necessary with respect to the several expeditions, planned against the coast of France? Was the numerous Staff, employed under Lord Moira, a circumstance that required no explanation? Why that numerous armament kept idle and unemployed, and suffered to be the theme of so much contempt and ridicule throughout the country, which never could attach on the gallant Nobleman who then commanded it, but on the Ministers by whom it was planned; for so far from any blame being imputable to the Noble Earl, he was confident that he would not be averse to appear at the Bar of that House, to shew that the whole disgrace, inseparable from this expedition, was to be attributed alone to the weak and imbecile conduct of his Majesty's Ministers. He would ask, why the troops in the West Indies were so cruelly and shamefully neglected, at a time when so many gaudy, expensive, and inactive camps were kept up throughout the country? Nothing, he asserted, but a miracle saved at that period the West-Indies, and their salvation was totally owing to the sickness and

diseases that prevailed amongst the troops of the enemy. He next adverted to the wretched state of the British army; the 29th regiment, he was well assured, lost four hundred men; and, in June, the hospitals in Martinico were crowded with British officers and British soldiers, who were in want, not only of medicines, but even bandages to dress the wounds they had received in gallantly fighting against the enemy. He next adverted to a fact, which he affirmed was well known to several of the officers,—that ninety men had been re-landed on the beach, covered with wounds, and many without limbs, where, for a night, they were left to the mercy of the elements. When there were such strong grounds for inquiry, how, he asked, could it be resisted? The death of General Vaughan, he asserted, was owing to his chagrin in not finding those reinforcements sent out which he demanded. His next motion was for “An account of the number of men who died in the ports of Plymouth, Southampton, and Portsmouth;” also for “A copy of a letter sent from the Mayor of Portsmouth and Colonel Lenox.” These were for the purpose of informing the House, that day after day many of the troops in those places expired in consequence of being cooped up in the transports. Many dead bodies were thrown overboard, and others were carried indecently through the streets without coffins. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, on a former occasion, held his information cheap, and even presumed to deny the fact; but he had several letters from officers on board the fleet, complaining of the circumstance, who, if the House would grant a committee, he had no doubt, would appear at the Bar, and prove the authenticity of his information. He next adverted to the fleet under the command of Admiral Christian; and here he would assert, that Ministers were again culpable; for he could not admit it as a justification for the delay of the fleet, that the Transport Board and Board of Ordnance suffered some idle *etiquette* to injure the public service. He could state, on the best authority, that the melancholy disasters which occurred to that fleet were not to be attributed to mere adverse winds, but to the negligence in not sending it out in small detachments, which would have arrived in time to reinforce the army, and yield the necessary succour to the islands. Mr. Sheridan next proceeded to read the following proclamation:

## ST. DOMINGO.

*Mole, St. Nicholas, Dec. 10.*

BY THE KING.

WE, William Parker, Esq. Rear-Admiral of the Red, and Gordon Forbes, Esq. Major-General and Commander in Chief of His Britannic Majesty's Forces by Land and Sea.

His Britannic Majesty, feeling for the distresses of the colony of St. Domingo, has received favourably the submissions of a great number of the inhabitants of every quarter, and granted them his protection.

It was to be believed, that all who had been instructed by the excess and the universality of calamities, would have hastened to unite themselves under his tutelary authority.

Thus His Majesty did not think it proper at first to display that appearance of power which would have announced the conqueror rather than the emancipator. He sent only a small force, which was sufficient to secure the general police, if the effervescence of opinions had been calm, but insufficient for reducing by force the great body of the mistaken inhabitants.

The beneficent views of His Majesty have been partly frustrated, when he concentrated his forces on some particular districts to which he has restored their tranquillity, their worship, and their opulence.

He has abandoned, for a moment and with regret, the remainder of the colonies to the ravages of anarchy.

But His Majesty owes to the glory of his arms to complete by force the work which he undertook from generosity. He owes it to public morals to annihilate a system destructive of all the social bonds which unite the colonists among themselves, and which unite the whole to one sovereign.

He owes to his personal sensibility to hold forth a succouring hand to a multitude of worthy men, who groan in every part of the island, and invoke his protection. He owes to his clemency the pardoning of errors. In fine, he owes to his justice the punishment of those who persist in refusing the paternal and regular government which is offered them, and who, after having made acts of submission, break their oaths by committing acts of rebellion.

His Majesty, by a continuation of naval victories, has so reduced the marine of the French Republic, that it is absolutely impossible for the government of that country to send any aid to its partisans in St. Domingo. He has even forced the Convention itself to proclaim, by an express decree, its impotency in that respect.

His Majesty has, therefore, determined to send to St. Domingo such a body of forces, that all resistance shall henceforth be impossible.

In confiding to us the command of his forces by sea and land, His Majesty has commanded us to fulfil exactly the views by which he himself is directed.

We bring then to all the inhabitants of St. Domingo, and to each individual, Peace or War, Prosperity or Destruction.

We promise, in the name of the King, that those who submit willingly, shall find, under the protection of His Majesty, the pardon of their errors, individual safety, and the preservation of their property.

Those who, after a voluntary submission, wish to leave the island, shall

be at liberty to embark for the American Continent, or for France, upon taking an oath not to bear arms against His Majesty during the war.

We declare, in the name of the King, that those who shall resist his arms, shall experience all the rigour of the laws of war, and that whoever violates an oath of fidelity shall be punished with death as a rebel.

Given in the House of the King, at Mole, Dec. 10, 1795.

(Signed)

PARKER and FORBES.

Mr. Sheridan proceeded to state, that if the papers for which he moved were produced, he would prove to the House a most solemn and serious charge of misconduct and mismanagement on the part of Ministers. If they feel bold on the occasion, they should feel grateful on the opportunity he gave them of vindicating their characters, and exculpating themselves from those charges with which they stand arraigned. He next adverted to their affected solicitude for peace. He must observe, there was nothing before the House to justify them in saying there was at this time any prospect of peace. He hoped and trusted that some opportunity would arise, in which they should have an answer from the Minister, what the prospect of negotiation was. He hoped that we should all know in a regular manner the result of the negotiation lately attempted; for silence upon such a subject was extremely dangerous. The impression that had been already made out of doors was considerable; and, although some persons might think that we are at war now, on account of the arrogant claims and unreasonable pretences of the French, he was convinced the general impression was, that we are at war, not on account of the arrogant claims, intolerable pride, or unreasonable pretences of the French, but because the Minister of this Country has not made a sincere attempt to negotiate. Such was his opinion; and he thought it fair to speak his conviction upon that subject. But whether the war be now imputable to French or to English counsels, nothing will insure future success so much as an inquiry. Therefore, assuming, for the sake of the argument, what he never would admit, that the French were the aggressors; assuming, what he knew to be false, that the war on our part was just and necessary, and even unavoidable; assuming all these things merely for argument, he would still affirm, there was every reason for that House to enter into the inquiry for which his motions were intended to pave the way; and therefore he trusted he should not be opposed upon this subject. He then concluded with his first motion.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS did not find himself called upon at present to trouble the House with many observations. On the subject of the continuance of the war, as being entirely unconnected with the present question, he would not enter at all. He

could not, however, help remarking upon the singular predicament in which he had been placed by the honourable gentleman. He had asserted, that towards the conclusion of the last session he had regretted that the period of the session did not admit of an inquiry into the conduct of the West-India war. He did not remember ever having uttered such a sentiment. He recollected perfectly of having assured the House that no less a force than twenty thousand men had been employed for the protection of the West-India Islands; a fact which he at that time, and which he now again, challenged any man to contradict. Notwithstanding, however, all the sarcasm and invective which the honourable gentleman, in his speeches upon the subject, had thought fit to employ, he was free to assure the House, that there was no one wish in his mind stronger than that for an inquiry into the whole conduct of the West-Indian war; and he promised, that a day would come, when he would vindicate the sincerity of the profession that he now made. But whatever were his private wishes, he was restrained by public motives from yielding at present to any motion for inquiry.—And he did it upon this principle, that by acceding to inquiry, Ministers must either lay before the public information which it would be extremely improper to disclose, or the House of Commons must form a judgment of their conduct from very partial documents. There were times, and this was one of them, when Ministers must lay a constraint upon their personal feelings, because they could not be gratified, consistently with a due regard to the interest of the public service. As to the motions now before the House, he thought that the honourable gentleman might have had a little private communication with persons in office, before he had submitted no fewer than twenty-one to the House. When a general sketch of them was put into his hand, he had no objection to the papers being produced. But he found afterwards that sketch to have been so imperfect, and that the views of the mover embraced such a detail as it would be altogether improper to lay before the House. The honourable Secretary, however, could not sit down without remarking on the line of conduct which the honourable gentleman had adopted. His motions chiefly relate to circumstances which happened two years ago. At the end of the session, he said that he (Mr. Dundas) closed with him for an inquiry. On the first day of this session, he talked in a lofty style upon the gross mismanagement of the war in the West Indies; and considering the magnitude of the expedition which was fitted out in October, and the preparations which have since been made for other armaments, together with the manner in which he then

talked, one would have thought that he would have brought forward his motion at the very commencement of the session ; instead of which, he gave notice of it for the twelfth of April, when it could be of no benefit to the country ; and not till then finding himself in want of information, he began to think of moving for papers on which to proceed. In opposition to what Mr. Sheridan advanced, he affirmed, that Sir Charles Grey, while in the West Indies, was reinforced by four regiments, which he sent to St. Domingo, in the persuasion that the other islands were in a state of sufficient security. An additional proof which he gave of his opinion on that subject was that he afterwards quitted the West Indies, which that gallant officer would not have done if he had conceived that at that period (up to the first of June) the islands were in any danger. He concluded with desiring, that if the honourable gentleman wished for an inquiry, he would give his honourable friend and him time to consider the twenty motions which he had submitted to the House, that they might know which to accede to, and which to reject.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that he considered the proposition of the right honourable gentleman for a short delay, in order to consider what papers he should grant as perfectly fair. But he wished to call the attention of the House to the reason why he had so long delayed bringing the subject forward. He certainly at the commencement of the session, when he was said to have menaced Ministers on this point, expected that an inquiry would have taken place into the whole conduct of the war. At that time an immense armament was preparing to set out for the West Indies, and had he then made his motions, it would have been said—“ Do you wish to disclose to the enemy the state of the islands ; do you wish to make known their wants at the very moment when means are taking to afford them the requisite supply ? ” Now the campaign was over, and the season for action past, it could not be urged that any danger could arise from disclosure. The whole speech of the right honourable gentleman went to accuse him with delay, and want of candour, in bringing forward his motions. He had not attempted to show that any communication which he demanded, could, in the smallest degree, be injurious to the public. He hoped that when he had considered the motions, he would be prepared, precisely, to state in what respect they could be productive of danger. The right honourable gentleman had contested his assertion with respect to Sir Charles Grey. It now however appeared from his own admission, that Sir Charles Grey had not the use of one single man. What was the argument of the right ho-



honourable gentleman? that Sir Charles Grey did not want reinforcements, else he would not have sent three regiments to St. Domingo, and afterwards dispatched a fourth to the same quarter. Except Sir Charles Grey had dispatched this force from the instructions of Ministers, or in the confidence of larger reinforcements being sent out for the security of the Islands, the right honourable gentleman attached to him a heavy responsibility. If he had been so miserably mistaken with respect to the security of the Islands, if he had acted on his own authority and judgement, then undoubtedly he, and not Ministers, were responsible. But if having the solemn assurance, and being in the daily expectation of the arrival of a larger force, he took upon himself to dispatch those four regiments, then Ministers were accountable why they had neglected to send out that force, which was essential for the security of the Islands. On this subject he should feel it necessary to bring forward an additional motion, "That Sir Charles Grey be directed to attend at the Bar of this House."

Mr. DUNDAS said, that he had only affirmed that till the 1st of June, Sir Charles Grey was under no uneasiness with respect to the security of the Islands; he had never asserted, that he did not expect an additional reinforcement.

Mr. FOX asked, whether the right honourable gentleman did not mean his argument to be understood in this way? "You talk of want of reinforcements, while Sir Charles Grey felt so secure on the subject, that he thought himself at liberty to dispatch to St. Domingo four regiments which had been sent out? The question then was, when Sir Charles Grey dispatched those regiments, was he in expectation of additional reinforcements?—If he thought the West-Indies safe, because he expected reinforcements, then it became a just ground of inquiry why these reinforcements had not arrived, and whether they had been kept back from unavoidable accidents, or from the negligence of Ministers. He professed himself ignorant of the fact; but he hoped that the real state of the case would come out. He had always thought an inquiry necessary; and he now considered it to be indispensable for the character of Sir Charles Grey."

Mr. Chancellor PITT thought an unfair advantage was taken of the assertion of his right honourable friend. When an honourable gentleman shortly expressed an argument, into which he afterwards meant to enter more fully, it was not to be expected that he should guard it with every minute qualification. His right honourable friend had stated as two strong arguments, that on the 1st of June, Sir Charles Grey felt no immediate uneasiness with

respect to the security of the Islands, that he had dispatched those four regiments to St. Domingo, and that he had set out on his return to this country. If during the length of time which afterwards intervened, before any reinforcement arrived, some danger had occurred, which he in the first instance could not foresee, that was a point afterwards to be argued.

Mr. FRANCIS said, that he would put the question upon a short issue. Was Sir Charles Grey perfectly satisfied of the security of the Islands, from the circumstance of being in possession of a force fully sufficient for their defence, or from the expectation of the arrival of a greater reinforcement?

General TARLETON asked whether, in sending the regiments to St. Domingo, Sir Charles Grey followed his own inclinations, or the instructions of Ministers?

Mr. SHERIDAN remarked, that this was a delicate point. He understood that Sir Charles Grey was always of opinion, that the force which he had was insufficient for the security of the Islands. Sir Charles Grey never did, never could make a declaration that those Islands could be retained without an additional force. But was not the inference which the right honourable gentleman obviously meant to draw from his statement—that Sir Charles Grey, on leaving the Islands, was perfectly satisfied with respect to their security, and the adequacy of the force left to protect them? But would Sir Charles Grey, he asked, have acted as he did, except in the conviction that a larger force was to be sent for their protection? He must persist therefore in his motion for the attendance of Sir Charles Grey, and the only question he should ask him at the bar was,—“Whether, upon sending away the regiments, and leaving the islands, he thought them in a state of security, except on the supposition of the arrival of additional reinforcements.”

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that gentlemen on the other side seemed to insinuate as if his right honourable friend wished to shift off the responsibility from himself to Sir Charles Grey. He appealed to the House, whether he had ever discovered a disposition of that sort, and whether he had not displayed, on every occasion, the most sincere respect for the merits, and the warmest and most grateful interest in the character of that gallant commander? His right honourable friend had stated, that Sir Charles Grey would not have left the Islands, except from the conviction of their perfect security—thus appealing to the acknowledged gallantry, fidelity, and zeal of that respectable officer as the most powerful argument which he could adduce; and this by gentlemen

on the other side, was attempted to be perverted into an imputation on his character. With respect to the motion for Sir Charles Grey's attendance at the bar, the honourable gentleman had avowed his object to be only to move for papers, in order to ascertain whether there was ground for inquiry. But should this motion be adopted, it went not only to decide the question of inquiry, but even to take a step for the purpose.

Mr. FOX admitted that the attendance of Sir Charles Grey could not be required till the question of inquiry was decided; but he contended that the mode in which the name of this gallant commander had been brought forward, furnished itself a cogent ground for an inquiry, and such as the House ought not to resist. Sir Charles Grey might think himself at liberty to quit the Islands, in the assurance that a reinforcement was coming out, and that an officer was appointed by His Majesty to assume the command. But that was no reason why an inference should be drawn, that he was perfectly satisfied with respect to the security of the Islands, if that reinforcement did not arrive. What had been attempted this night, furnished an illustration of the modern doctrine of Ministers' discussion without inquiry. In answer to facts and arguments, they brought forward partial and mutilated statements, and then refused to produce the documents, by which the real state of the case could be ascertained. In the present instance, they attempted to shelter themselves under the opinion of a respectable commander, but refused to bring forward the papers which were necessary, in order to shew on what grounds and principles that opinion was founded. Had not the present explanation taken place, they would then have had the advantage of their unfounded inference, and the misrepresentation of the opinion of Sir Charles would have gone abroad to the country. He wished the papers to be brought forward, and to be made the subject of inquiry. The decision would then rest, not on his opinion, or on that of Sir Charles Grey; it would be determined not by hypotheses, but by facts and by evidence; in that way only the real merits of the case could be ascertained.

The question that the debate should be adjourned to Thursday next was then put and carried. Mr. Grey, who had been absent during the conversation, and who entered as the Speaker was putting the question to adjourn, said that he must beg to detain the House for a few moments. Many allusions he understood had been just made to a character in whom he was highly interested. When on a former occasion he declared that he would not interfere in the subject of debate, it was because the relation to whom he al-

luded had enjoined him not to state any thing which he might have collected from his information, or which might seem to stand upon his authority. With this injunction he was desirous to comply. At the same time he must state, that the most earnest wish of that person was to have the fullest inquiry instituted into every transaction in which he was concerned, so far as was consistent with the public interest. He must therefore beg, that no inference should be drawn from any supposed opinion of that person, except that papers were produced which explained the grounds and principles upon which that opinion was founded. Thus much he found necessary to state, in justice to a character whom he had every reason to respect and love. He therefore hoped that if any opinion of that person had been brought forward, and any inference attempted to be founded upon it, that no evidence should be refused which was necessary to elucidate the subject, and that all the circumstances of the case would undergo the fullest and most minute investigation.

*Friday, 22d April.*

The order of the day for the House resolving itself into a Committee on the wine-duty bill being read,

Mr. ROSE moved, that it be an instruction to the Committee, to prohibit auctioneers from selling any wines which cannot be proved to have paid the duty.

General SMITH insisted that such a proof would be impossible in every case to be given.

Mr. ROSE acknowledged that there might be some difficulty in particular instances, but he contented that if such a provision was not made, wine might come from private cellars into the market, duty free.

Mr. SHERIDAN opposed this provision, on account of its impracticability. He did not see however, why private gentlemen should not pay for their stock as well as wine dealers; or that the rich should be allowed to drink their wine at two shillings a bottle for several years, when the poor were paying three shillings and sixpence.

The House divided on Mr. ROSE's motion,

Ayes, 38—Noes, 20—Majority, 18.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee on the bill; but on account of the thinness of the House, Mr. ROSE moved, that the chairman report progress, and that the Committee sit again on Monday next.

Ordered.

Mr. GREY gave notice, that on Tuesday se'nnight, in conse-

quence of the papers that had been laid upon the table, he would propose to the House a series of resolutions, implicating Ministers, on a charge of a flagrant violation of the law, and gross misapplication of the public money; and if the resolutions should be agreed to by the House, he meant them as the ground for an impeachment.

Mr. DENT moved, that the Committee on the dog tax be deferred till Monday, on account of the absence of the Minister, when he would propose entering into that stage of the bill, whether he was present or not. He would also take the sense of the House that no difference should be made between assessed and unassessed houses; and also upon the application of the whole produce of the tax to the relief of the poor rates.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he did not know how the bill concerned the Chancellor of the Exchequer at all, except there was some special provision in it against a destructive animal, with "William Pitt" upon his collar, which had been found killing sheep. He was not at all surprised at any creature of that right honourable gentleman living upon the public. He seriously advised, however, the Secretary of the Treasury to have another bill prepared; for the clauses of the present were so absurd, that he was confident the bill would be thrown out.

General SMITH gave notice, that on Monday next he would move that John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. be ordered to attend in his place on this day se'nnight.

The Report of the Committee on the general enclosure, was brought up and laid upon the table.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR said, the bill had undergone several alterations, but that all its material parts remained the same. He was confident that it would be found of essential advantage to the country, and that it would do credit to those who had prepared it. He moved that it be recommitted on Wednesday se'nnight.

Mr. DUNCOMBE approved of this bill; but he thought it would be rash to pass a bill of such importance in the course of one session.

Mr. HUSSEY entirely disapproved of the bill, as it promised advantages which it would never produce. He particularly adverted to its making no provision for the cultivation of the royal forests.

Mr. CURWEN was of opinion, that it ought to stand over till next session.

- Lord SHEFFIELD thought that at least it ought to pass through a Committee in the present session.

*Monday, 25th April.*

The order of the day was read for resuming the adjourned Committee on the wine-duty bill.

Mr. ROSE moved for leave to withdraw the bill, because the Clerk had inserted the clause in the bill, for the introduction of which he had moved that instructions should be given to the Committee, and consequently it became irregular. The clause was to prohibit auctioneers from selling any wine but what had been proved to have paid the duty.

Mr. SHERIDAN did not rise to object to the motion, but he was in hopes that the honourable gentleman would have found other defects to ground his motion on. He thought it very improper that the stock of persons selling wine should have been taken before the bill had passed into a law, and he was totally at a loss to know how the new duty could attach, or any penalty in case of selling it, upon the old duties only, could be laid, before that law had been really decreed. A case had happened this morning, he heard, where a person had sent out wine to his customer, burdened with the charge of the old duties only, and an excise officer had seized the wine. Now he wanted to know by what authority the excise officer had made that seizure?

Mr. ROSE conceived the honourable gentleman had been misinformed, for nothing more had hitherto been done, after taking the stock in hand, than to deliver a notice to the dealer that the stock might become subject to the new duty. The bill was withdrawn, and another ordered in its stead.

The SECRETARY AT WAR brought up an account of all monies issued by the Barrack-master General for temporary barracks, which were ordered to be laid upon the table, and copies printed.

Mr. LUSHINGTON moved for the third reading of the bill for the better recovery of small debts within the city of London.

Mr. JEKYLL again called the attention of the House to this bill, which was framed for the purpose of extending the jurisdiction of the court of requests in the city of London to debts of five pounds, which was formerly confined to debts of forty shillings. That court derived its origin from the Privy Council, at a time by no means favourable to that grand boast of British liberty—a trial by jury; for it was formed in the tyrannical reign of Henry VIII. and afterwards revived again by James. It had been urged in support of the present bill, that the difference between the value of money at that time and the present, afforded a sufficient ground for the introduction



of this bill. But this argument, if insisted on, went much than the introducers of the bill intended. For the same the authority of every court of conscience in the kingdom should equally extended. This bill, which was to take away the jury in all cases under five pounds, was intended to apply to London where there was least of all occasion for such a measure. questions of great importance might come under the decision of persons who were not competent to be judges. They were to take away a trial by jury in a place where there were already good courts to decide upon such cases, a court where a jury sits as a court of record. Now, if the present bill passed, the assistance a person could make, if sued upon a false debt, would be filing an indictment for perjury, which would create great expense and expence. He trusted, however, the House would not take the trial for debt out of the hands of a jury, and place it in the hands of Commissioners. He, therefore, moved this amendment, "that the bill be read this day three months."

Mr. MAURICE ROBINSON said a few words against the bill. He would always oppose any measure which tended to infringe the trial by jury, which he considered to be the corner stone of British liberty.

Mr. Chancellor PITT, from what he had then heard, was in favour of the propriety of deferring the question. It was a question of great importance, and it demanded some deliberation. He regretted that it had not called the attention of other gentlemen besides the learned gentleman, and been discussed at an earlier part of the session. If any means could be suggested of preserving the trial by jury for small debts, at a less expence than it had hitherto occasioned, he would certainly give his consent to that preferable measure.

Mr. Alderman LUSHINGTON had no objection to the bill, and opposed delay.

The bill was ordered to be read this day three months.

General SMITH said, he had gone through every page of the proceedings of the court martial on Colonel Cawthorne, and every line he had read fully confirmed him in his opinion of the justice of the sentence. He therefore had the two following resolutions to submit to the House: "That the copy of the paper entitled 'Proceedings of the court martial held on John Fenton Cawthorne Esq. presented to the House on the 8th day of April, be taken into consideration on Friday morning next;' and "that Colonel Cawthorne be ordered to attend at the same time at the bar of the House."

Lord TYRCONNEL wished the House to be fully informed on the subject before it came under discussion, and was therefore desirous of giving members time to read the whole proceedings.— He was also anxious that his unfortunate relation might have time to make as good a defence as possible. He therefore hoped the House would agree to appoint Monday next for taking up this business.

Mr. DENT supported the proposition of Lord Tyrconnel.

General SMITH's motions were then agreed to, with the amendment of Monday in place of Friday.

The order of the day was then read for the commitment of the dog-tax bill.

Mr. DENT moved that the Speaker leave the chair.

Mr. SHERIDAN expected that a motion would have been made to withdraw the bill, and on that account he formerly recommended His Majesty's Ministers to have another ready, for he conceived it would be losing time to attempt to amend it. He had never seen a bill so absurd and objectionable throughout before, and indeed he was not sorry that it was so, for it appeared to him a just punishment for the pride and presumption of those persons, who, because they retain a seat in that House, imagine themselves so many Chancellors of Exchequers, and impatiently step forward to propose new taxes. Instead of being desirous to take the management of finance out of Ministers' hands, he thought it would be better for them to leave it where it is; because by leaving Ministers in the undisturbed possession of the privilege of imposing taxes, they left them a responsibility for the heavy burdens they laid upon the people, to defray the enormous expences of those wars their indiscreet ambition occasioned, and consequently all the odium. Now in regard to the bill itself, he never met with one more extraordinarily worded; and the folly of it extended even to the title; for, whereas the title should have been "A tax bill," it was entitled, "A bill for the better protection of the persons and property of His Majesty's subjects against the evil arising from the increase of dogs, by subjecting the keeping or having such dogs to a duty." Hence, instead of supposing, as it generally had been supposed, that dogs were better than watchmen for the protection of property, people might be led to imagine that dogs were guilty of all the burglaries usually committed. In the preamble, also, there was the same species of phraseology: for it begins—"Whereas many dangers, accidents, and inconveniences," which, to be sure, was a beautiful climax! "had happened to the cattle, and other property of His Majesty's subjects." Now he had never before heard of any particular acci-

dents happening to property from the hydrophobia, except in the case of cattle. In the *Adventurer*, a periodical paper, published by the ingenious Dr. Hawkesworth, he remembered, indeed, a sort of humorous account of a dog that bit a hog in the streets; the hog bit a farmer, and the farmer bit a cow; and, what was very extraordinary, each conveyed his peculiar quality to the other: for the hog barked like a dog, the farmer grunted like a hog, and the cow did the best to talk like the farmer. Now, he thought, there must have been something like this disposition in inanimate things also, by the conduct of the honourable gentleman looking so carefully after property; for, unless an instance had occurred of furniture's behaving in a disorderly manner, or a dumb waiter's barking in consequence of the hydrophobia, he conceived such a phrase could not have been introduced. The next part he had to notice was a clause, the blank of which he hoped would never be filled, that very solemnly stated, "For and in respect of every such dog, and for and in respect of every such bitch," a sum hereafter to be fixed was to be paid, and a register of such payments fixed on the church-door where the parties reside. So that, if the bill passed, they ought to pass another to enlarge all the church and chapel doors throughout the kingdom, for, what with one tax and another, no modern church or chapel door was capable of containing a register of them all.

There was another clause, which was to enact, That whenever a person did not pay the duty, no action should apply against any person or persons, for destroying, or converting such dog or dogs, bitch or bitches, to their own use, as were not paid for. Now, if this clause was absolutely to remain, and any person did destroy or convert, as the phrase is, another person's dog, he would most probably assume, that it was not paid for; or otherwise, by what means could it commonly be proved? So far the bill was repugnant to the principles of humanity; for it was nothing less than a death-warrant against that valuable race of animals. Besides, he wanted to know what principle the bill proceeded upon, that the same privilege should not be also allowed with respect to horses, since there was a certain species of dogs, such as pointers, setters, &c. that were scarcely less valuable. According to the same mode of reasoning too, he did not see why there should not be a general scramble for all the hats upon the heads of those gentlemen who did not pay the hat duty; nor why any person should not convert the powder, another man wore, to his own use, if he suspected that man had not taken out a licence. It was true, that after any person had lost his dog in this manner, a clause was provided, whereby he might

bring an action, and maintain a right to recover damages from the converter ; but how would it happen, if the dog, still fond of his former attachments, should follow his old master ? That master might, in such a case, be whipped as a dog-stealer, though he should afterwards gain an action to prove the prosecutor the thief. He abhorred the bill for its inhumanity, because it was an encouragement to massacre; and even if the inhumanity of it were entirely out of the question, he should consider it ill timed, in point of policy, inasmuch as it was brought forward at a time when a part of this useful species was co-operating with the Combined Powers, by maintaining, with unparalleled ferocity, the cause of religion and humanity. In short, it was shewing such ingratitude to our allies, as could never be justified. He came at last to one qualifying clause, which was intended to enact, That puppies, when born, should not be liable to the penalty. But he wished to know at what time they were to be made liable, and by what parish register they were to ascertain the birth of puppies, for he thought there would be some difficulty in getting people to come forward and record precisely every hour what bitch litters. A doctrine had been inculcated, that dogs devour the sustenance of the poor, and therefore we were now to be in the state of a besieged garrison, and feed upon the fare of dogs and cats. The bill in this instance tended to defeat its own object ; for could it be supposed that the poor, at this moment of dearth and scarcity, could afford to divide their scanty meal with such animals ? and if they did, what was the conclusion, but that they would rather deprive themselves of some of the necessaries of life, than lose their dumb, but faithful companions ? Upon the score of humanity, he had still another objection to offer. If the bill passed, there would be so many dogs knocked on the head, that it would tend to harden the minds of the common people, and familiarize them to scenes of cruelty and murder; and the mere sight of so many curs hanging at the doors of the lower orders of the people, already too frequently complained of on account of their brutality to speechless animals, might lead to far more fatal consequences. If the tax were levied only upon hounds and sporting dogs, he should oppose it, because it would only tend to the diminution of the few pleasures which induce gentlemen to spend their fortunes on their own estates. Upon these grounds he wished the bill might not be persisted in.

The SECRETARY AT WAR did not mean to object to the whole of the bill, but to part of it only. He thought a tax upon all sporting dogs fair, because they are a kind of luxury, and their owners can afford to pay. But he thought there was a passion,

spleen, and enmity, against the canine race, in the formation of the bill, that amounted really to a principle of extirpation. From the tenor of it he should have been apt to imagine that Actæon had revived, or that some fabulous divinities had descended to pronounce an eternal ban and curse on the whole race of dogs. They certainly at times were disagreeable, and he had felt that inconvenience; but he should have been loath to have gone, in consequence, to avenge himself on the whole species. It was unworthy of this or any other country, to levy a rate on any animal, because that animal was not employed in tilling ground, or because the poor might feed on dog's provisions. It appeared as if there was not room enough on earth for men and dogs. The honourable gentleman had entered into several calculations to shew the number of dogs and the quantity of provisions they consumed; but he seemed to forget that there was a great quantity of waste which they destroyed, which, if they were annihilated, would become a greater nuisance. He seemed to imagine, that all the refuse, now given to dogs, would go to human creatures. No such thing; for they consume a great quantity of offal, which could not well be otherwise disposed of, and consequently his calculation of the quantity of provisions was exceedingly erroneous. He had also excited an alarm upon this head, by observing that population increases with provision. So it does, but not if there be a greater quantity of provisions than the consumers require. How much of the produce of the earth goes to other purposes than the food of man? Does not the honourable gentleman himself give to his coach-horses and his saddle-horses, what would serve for human food? But when you consider the sustenance of men, you are to consider their comforts and enjoyments also; or if you do not, we shall revert to rudeness and barbarism. Now, as to that part of the bill which related to the dogs of the poor, his objections were too numerous to be repeated. Some dogs are retained by the poor as implements of trade, and the Legislature ought not to tax the industry, but the expenditure, of the people. Some were retained for their companionable qualities; and when the fidelity and winning attachment of a dog was remembered, it was unkind to propose a plan which should tend to destroy him. Dogs kept for sporting, were peculiar to the rich, and though he did not mean to arraign sporting, he thought it not the highest sort of amusement, inasmuch as it reduced the hunter to the condition of the animal he hunted. With the rich, it might be taxed; but with the poor, the affection for a dog was so natural, that in poetry and painting it had been constantly recorded, and in any sort of domestic representation, we scarcely see a picture without

a memorial of this attachment. If the rich man feels a partiality for a dog, what must a poor man do, who has so few amusements? — A dog is the companion of his laborious hours; and when he is bereft of his wife and children, fills up the drear vacuity. It is a well-known fact, that Alexander Selkirk, upon whose narrative the story of Robinson Crusoe was founded, cultivated the society of every animal upon the island, except those which he was obliged to kill for food. This was his greatest satisfaction, and a dog affords a similar satisfaction to the poor. Would the House then sacrifice that honest, virtuous satisfaction? An honourable gentleman behind him (Mr. Buxton) disapproved of any difference between the poor and rich, because he wished for equality, forgetting that equal burdens are laid upon unequal means, and that they ought to be proportioned in the same manner as rewards and punishments. — But although he wished the tax to be levied upon sporting dogs, he was a friend to the game laws, and to aristocratical distinctions; and he thought all the arguments that had been urged against the game laws were recommendations in their favour, provided they were not oppressive. He did not think that poor men kept dogs for the destruction of game, and he lived in a game county where he was qualified to judge, and if a poacher wanted a dog for that purpose, he could afford to pay for it; so that, extending the tax to the poor, would be no protection to the game. As to the worrying of sheep, the dogs commonly kept by poor people were too small; for the dogs that worry sheep are pointers, hounds, lurchers, guard-dogs, &c. and whenever they are once guilty of that vice, they will never leave it off till they are destroyed; but, dead or alive, they hunt the animal, and have been known to rear the skins in tanners' yards. He was in perfect conformity with his honourable friend, when he did not wish to levy any assessment on the poor; for if people, distressed as some were who kept dogs, would deprive themselves of part of their food to keep a dog, that was the best proof of the value of the animal, and he knew if they were assessed, how likely they would be to be taken up by the parish officers. An honourable friend (Mr. Buxton) had said, that no person who receives relief from the parish ought to be allowed to keep a dog. He differed from him in opinion, because the whole class of labourers are so liable to apply for relief, on account of the unequal balance of their earnings and expenditure, that every accident or calamity subjects them to the necessity of making such application. It would be cruel and impolitic to pass such a law; for it is a sort of law, from which every man would revolt. The dog is a companion to the solitary man, and to the man of family a play-



fellow for his children ; and these considerations induced him to wish that satisfaction to be preserved to the poor. He had been led on by the subject farther than he intended ; but he could not think of sacrificing any man's feelings to any consideration of interest which had been held out from the extension of the tax.

Mr. PENTON said, he objected to the general principle of the bill. The most beggarly nation would not, he said, adopt a measure calculated to exterminate the whole of the canine species. In some parts of Germany, dogs were taxed according to their size—a regulation which, if it was to take place in this kingdom, would subject him to a severe impost, as he once weighed a dog of his against a nobleman in the other House, when the dog outweighed the Peer by a pound. The hanging of dogs would familiarize the people to barbarity ; and the circumstance of a park-keeper once killing a favourite spaniel of his, when he was a boy, and cutting the animal's head off afterwards with a hatchet, made such an impression on his mind, as he was sure never could be erased from his memory. Had he had the hatchet in his hand, and the park-keeper in his power, he could not now say what might have been the consequence. How then could the House say, that the poor man, placed in a similar situation, would not be actuated by similar feelings ? As far as a tax on luxury, he had no objection to the bill ; but the poor should certainly be exempted. On the whole, the bill was so extremely exceptionable, that he recommended it to be withdrawn.

Mr. BUXTON professed himself a friend to the measure. He would not follow the right honourable gentleman through all his theoretical observations, but was convinced, if the House was actuated by real humanity, that they would curtail the number of dogs, as the keeping of even of one of these animals must cost a poor man something, and that expence must take from the support of his family. Dogs were only, among the lower orders, useful to poachers, and no industrious man would wish to keep a dog. He still thought it hard, that those who were assessed for poor's rates should be compelled to pay for such an indulgence as a pauper keeping a dog.

Mr. DENT said, that he doubted not that those who had opposed the bill so strenuously, would return to their constituents much the happier for the speeches they had delivered ; for his own part he was satisfied that by the conduct he had followed, he had done his duty. It was said that every man set up to be his own Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it appeared to him, that every man set up to be his own buffoon. By the present bill, there was

no intention to introduce any fresh regulation for the preservation of game. This was not its purpose. It was said that a dog was a harmless play-fellow to the children of the cottager, but he had received a letter which shewed what kind of play-fellow it was. The letter stated that a person who had seven children, with whom his dog had been used to play, was bit by this dog, and also four of his children, in consequence of which they had died of the hydrophobia. At Manchester, thirty-three persons, within a twelvemonth, had been admitted into the infirmary, affected with this desperate malady: and at Southampton, two or three hundred persons had been bit. The number of dogs consumed a great deal of the food which might be useful to alleviate the wants of the poor. Sheep's heads could not be obtained by the poor, as they were all bought up for the use of dogs. He could never agree to any distinction in the sums to be imposed upon the rich and the poor. Such inequality he considered as operating as a land-tax, and could view it in no other light. The object in the bill was regulation, not revenue, and to remedy the dreadful miseries arising from the frequency of hydrophobia. He wished that the bill, though passed, should not have force for six months, in order by this means not to occasion the immediate destruction of a number of dogs, but negatively to effect a diminution by discouraging the breed. He considered it as a false humanity which was affected, by the idea of diminishing the comforts of the poor man in depriving him of his dog, while in reality this privation would enable him better to provide for his family. He had seen a paper, in which he found that a tax on dogs was stated as an article of revenue, an anticipation that seemed to promise no good to the object of this bill. It was a real fact, that he had letters from every part of the country, especially from sheep counties, that confirmed him in the opinion, that though a tax of a guinea, or even five, were laid on the dog, it would soon be regained by the saving of sheep, immense numbers of which were now destroyed. The expence of a dog amounted at least to a penny a day, and upon his calculation of the whole number, more money was consumed on dogs, than the whole produce of the poor's rates. The same expence that a dog occasioned, would be sufficient for the maintenance of a child, and he was sure that it would be a very great saving to the poor, were they by any means relieved from this burden. He still was of opinion, that the produce of the tax should go to the poor's rates, and he would take the sense of the House upon that point.

Mr. COURTENAY said, he had listened very attentively to the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had just discovered, in a profound and accurate investigation, that a dog cost a penny a day, whether he eat little or much, or whether he eat *nothing*. On what ground the honourable gentleman had founded this extraordinary calculation, and conclusion, he could not possibly imagine. The honourable gentleman had fixed his *dentes canini* on those who opposed his favourite bill—his *dentes sapientiæ* were probably not yet grown. He had said, that every man was become his own buffoon, but if the honourable gentleman meant to assume that character, it must be in the other House, where he might substitute a proxy: perhaps he might prevail on his right honourable friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to transfer him there, that he might have an opportunity of voting and jesting through a substitute, with due dignity and decorum.

Mr. Courtenay said, he could not possibly approve of his right honourable friend's (Mr. Windham's) sarcastical allusion, who supposed, that our *new* Chancellor of the Exchequer still retained a consciousness of having animated some animal in a former state of existence, which has been hunted and worried by dogs, (according to the Pythagorean system) and now took an opportunity of avenging himself on the whole species. However, he doubted whether the honourable gentleman had been educated in that school of philosophy: if he had, he would probably have observed one of its salutary and singular precepts—all the disciples were enjoined to keep profound silence for *seven* years, from the commencement of their initiation.

The honourable gentleman had conceived most dreadful apprehensions of the direful effects of canine madness; however, to alleviate that horror, which had taken such possession of his imagination, he begged leave to suggest the great utility which sometimes resulted from a state of insanity.—A celebrated poet, (Mr. Dryden) had expressed this idea beautifully and distinctly in the following couplet:

“ Great wit to madness sure is near ally'd,

“ And thin partitions do their bounds divide.”

Now, *if* the honourable gentleman had been luckily bit by a mad dog, he might have incidentally, in the course of his insanity, displayed some symptoms of wit: and he was persuaded the honourable gentleman would most spiritedly and cheerfully submit to the risque and danger on the pleasing prospect of possessing such a brilliant quality; which, *if* he did not obtain by this means, he must ever despair of acquiring. And, he could assure the honour-

able gentleman, this mode of becoming a wit, was neither so chimerical nor ludicrous as it might at first appear. The late Lord Chesterfield had laid it down as a maxim, that, the only possible process by which a Dutchman could become a wit, was by being bit by a mad dog:—and so ambitious were a late Burgo-master at Amsterdam, of being distinguished by this shining accomplishment, that with great courage, he submitted to this alarming operation. Here, then, was an incentive, an example, and encouragement for the honourable gentleman; and he could never suppose for a moment, that an Englishman would yield the palm on this or any other occasion to a Dutchman!

The honourable gentleman had stated his receiving letters from several shepherds, thanking him for introducing a tax on dogs; and lamenting the losses in most plaintive and pathetic strains. They had addressed *him* poetically, in this epistolatory strain:

“The dogs, my sweet swain, do our fleecy sheep kill;”  
to which the honourable gentleman might reply---

“I am ready to cry, both for them, and my bill.”

The honourable gentleman had invidiously asserted, that a dog consumed as much as would maintain a child: surely he did not recollect that the people of this country were of a moral and religious disposition; that they read the scriptures, where it is enjoined, “Not to throw the children’s meat to the dogs.” None but Jacobins would disregard this holy precept: he believed the English children were better fed and taught than any other children in Europe; and more of them died, he could confidently assert, from repletion than inanition.

It had likewise been asserted, that in Bath, a resolution had passed to afford no relief from the poor’s rates to any person who kept a dog; and if this were true, the people at Bath must indeed be very ungrateful; for dogs were essential domestics in that city, as dinner could not be dressed without their assistance. Many gentlemen in the House must remember the anecdote mentioned by Smollet, when the whole corporation were reduced to a state of starvation and distress by tying up the turn-spit dogs for a whole day, and preventing the Mayor and Aldermen from dining at their usual hour.

The loyal people of Bath surely could not forget the obligations they owed to dogs, and if he had the honour of representing that celebrated city, he should be particularly anxious to obviate the indignant impression which such a *Robespierian* resolution would excite, as it offered a premium to the poor to assassinate their dogs, as a necessary qualification (superadded to poverty) to intitle them to public charity.

It had been asserted in the course of this debate, that two or three hundred persons had been bitten at Southampton; but where was the proof of this? He understood that it was customary (especially since this bill had been in agitation) to report, that every species of insanity, from a *strait-waistcoat* phrenzy, to a fit of the vapours, were occasioned by the bite of a dog: he was convinced, that not one case out of fifty, said to be attended with strong symptoms of the hydrophobia, was actually founded on fact. He begged leave to refer the honourable gentleman to a curious paper in the Philosophical and Literary Memoirs of the Manchester Society, on this very subject; a work which would have done honour to either of our Universities, if it had originated there.

Could the honourable gentleman transplant himself into the breast of a poor man, he would sympathise with his feelings; he would exclaim, in an unusual and impassioned style of eloquence, and apply the celebrated eulogium on chivalry to the canine species: "Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank or sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought guard of life, the cheap defence of villagers, the growl of sentiment, the bark of alarm—All gone—gone for ever."

England had always been celebrated for her breed of dogs:—the persevering courage of her natives were even exemplified in the bull-dog.—Her hounds and hunters were renowned in all quarters of the globe. Homer's characteristical eulogium might justly be extended and applied to Britain:

Ἀργὸς ἵππ. βότον καὶ ἀχαιὶδὰ καὶ λευγαίην.

He begged pardon for this Greek quotation; he did not at the moment recollect, how ill a passage from Demosthenes had been received in the House; and he wanted to speak intelligibly to the country gentlemen, who were so deeply involved and interested in this momentous question.

Mr. Courtenay then sincerely declared, he did not mean to say any thing invidiously, or to misrepresent the arguments of the honourable gentleman. He had particularly avoided taking any notice of the preamble of the bill, which had been ridiculed with such pointed wit, and severe raillery, by an honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan). For his part, he was rather inclined to apologise and defend the introducer of the bill on this point:—At first, he owned he seemed rather absurd—in a studied preamble to say—that the bill was designed to preserve His Majesty's subjects, their cattle, and *property*, from the effect of canine madness.—But

it should be considered, that the honourable gentleman had extended his studies and researches far and wide—before he introduced his bill into the House.—The idea was taken from the work of a great philosopher and traveller, the Baron MUNCHAUSEN, who, among many strange and singular adventures, mentions the being disturbed one night by a dreadful noise in his wardrobe, and on rising to examine into the circumstance, had discovered his great furcloak had been bitten, by a mad-dog, and in its phrenzy, had communicated the contagion to coats, waistcoats, and breeches indifferently. The Baron, after using all gentle and soothing means to compose the insurrection, was at last obliged to send for a member of the faculty—two or three Middlesex justices—a troop of constables, to take the rebellious wardrobe into custody, and to bind them over to their good behaviour.

Mr. Courtenay said, he was not an absolute determined enemy to the principles of the bill;—but if the cottager's dogs were not exempted from the tax—it would appear as a signal for a general massacre of the species.—Was the honourable gentleman actuated by interest or ambition on the question?—Was any place to be struck out to reward this finance Minister?—Would the old Chancellor of the Exchequer constitute his friend and coadjutor governor of the Isle of Dogs—as something appropriate to his meritorious exertions on the occasion? The fondnesses—the caresses—the playfulness, and the fidelity of dogs recommended and endeared them. To accustom the people to look with hard-hearted indifference on the murderers of these faithful animals, might debase their moral feelings and by degrees form a cruel temper and character.—The dog was a sagacious animal, associated ideas, and formed a syllogism intuitively (he warmly wished he could say so of every member in the House) a circumstance he would mention which, justly recommended the Reverend Divine to the favour and patronage of that learned Monarch, James the First\*. He thus proved that a hound made a regular syllogism.—I have frequently, says he, observed in the chase, that when the pack have come to fault at the junction of three roads—that the leading hound has scented the first, then the second—and finding the hare has not taken either, has instantly followed the *third* full cry.—Here is the *major*, the *minor*, and the consequence, run through by the hound in all the regular modes of a syllogism.

It was also a fact, that dogs destroyed a great deal of noxious vermin—weazles, rats, pole-cats, &c.—and he verily believed the foxes, that were so anxiously preserved (their covers kept up at a considerable expence) and their breed encouraged for sport,

\* Grainger's Biographical Dictionary.



did more mischief, than the whole persecuted species ; nor could he possibly believe that the high price of bread, was owing to feeding the dogs with sheeps heads ; though it had been so confidently asserted by so many honourable gentlemen !

If the honourable gentleman had lately been a representative in the great and flourishing kingdom of the Isle of Man, his antipathy to the species might possibly be accounted for : he believed it was the only precedent that could be adduced for the present tax. A female dog, (decency and decorum would not allow him to use the gross epithet in the bill,) had under the physical propensity of a fit of gallantry, collected a pack of lovers, and in consequence of a quarrel among the gallants—

——*terririma* (as of old) *belli causa*

a violent uproar arose ; the affrighted female flew into the House of Keys, then sitting and deliberating on momentous affairs ; the ravishers pursued, broke into the senate ; the Speaker exerted himself, as you, Sir, would do on such an occasion, (addressing the Chair) but all in vain ; several of the senators were wounded or bit ;—the offending female was committed to Bridewell by a unanimous vote ;—and, from a spirit of revenge, a heavy tax was laid on dogs the next day.

If we ascend to the remotest times of antiquity, we shall find dogs the faithful companion and associate of man in toils and dangers. In a late work, which unites philosophy and poetry, “ the progress of society,” this generous domestic animal is thus described :

“ The faithful dog, the natural friend of man,  
 “ The unequal federation first began ;  
 “ Aided the hunter in his savage toil,  
 “ And, grateful, took the refuse of the spoil ;  
 “ Watch’d round his head at sleep’s unguarded hour,  
 “ And drove the hungry tyger from his bower.  
 “ In deeds of death and danger led the way,  
 “ And bled unconquer’d in the doubtful fray :  
 “ Still fought, tho’ wounded, by his master’s side,  
 “ And pleas’d to save him, grasp’d his prey, and dy’d.”

Virgil describes King Evander issuing from his palace with no other life guards—

*Necnon, & gemini custodes, limine ab alto  
 Procedunt, gressumque canes comitantur herilem.*

Poets and philosophers have celebrated,—I had almost said the moral qualities of a dog ; and it is recorded of Charles the First, (by his noble historian) that in appreciating the different merits of the several species, his Majesty preferred the greyhound, because

it has the fidelity of the others, without cringing or flattery.—What a misfortune was it to the unhappy monarch, that his courtiers and bishops had not more of the greyhound in their disposition;—if they had, he might have escaped his calamities.

On these grounds Mr. Courtenay declared, he should give his hearty vote for rejecting this bill.

Sir ROBERT SALUSBURY approved of the bill.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he rose merely to explain the vote he was to give that night. He confessed that he had never been very friendly to this bill, and he concurred in almost every thing that had been urged against it, so far as this particular measure was concerned. He was perfectly in earnest with regard to a tax upon dogs as an object of revenue. He never could agree to an indiscriminate sum, to be levied equally on all dogs, and he had been the first to propose a different mode of imposition. Upon considering the subject, he was now convinced that it would be best to exempt entirely the unassessed houses, unless where more than one was kept, and where it might be suspected that the dog was merely quartered in that house by persons in different circumstances, and where the species of the dog determined the purpose for which he was intended. With these qualifications, he was perfectly in earnest in a tax of this kind, as it was a tax upon voluntary expenditure, and on expence of that kind that proved the ability of the person to pay. Since it was impossible to discover a tax universally equal, it was best to take that which could be ascertained on these principles. The outline of his plan was three shillings for every dog kept in assessed houses, and where there were more than one five shillings each, and three shillings for the dog of the cottager, where there were more than one. He meant to propose resolutions following up these ideas, but as he wished to have them properly digested, he intended to move them on Wednesday next, in a Committee of ways and means. It might be thought that in the mode of levying the tax, it might be proper to give an interest to the parish in order to see it fairly paid. But when it was considered that to impose the tax upon the poor, and at the same time commit the care of levying it to the parish, was merely putting an expence upon the people, who were, perhaps, to be supported from the poor rates, for the advantage of the poor rates; and as it was an unusual way of proportioning the sums for the poor rates which were laid upon property, no advantage would be found to result from such a plan. For these reasons he felt himself under the necessity of opposing the bill in its present form.

Mr. LECHMERE recommended a heavy tax on fox-hounds and terriers, &c.

Mr. DENT explained.

The question being put, that the Speaker do now leave the chair, it was carried in the negative.

Mr. SHERIDAN moved, that this House will, on this day three months, resolve itself into the said Committee.

Carried.

Mr. GREY moved, that there be laid before the House an account of all sums of money granted by Parliament since the 29th of October, 1795, and expended before the 5th of April, 1796, and the statement of the service for which they have been applied.

Ordered.

The order of the day being read on the Westminster Police bill, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House upon the bill.

Upon reading the first clause of the bill, which declared that the former Police act should be perpetual, a conversation arose : after which, the clause for rendering the bill perpetual was negatived, and an amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to continue it for five years, adopted.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of a supply to be granted to His Majesty,

The SECRETARY AT WAR moved, " That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a sum not exceeding 815,673l. 19s. 10d. be granted to His Majesty for defraying the extraordinary expences of the army incurred and paid by the Paymaster-General of the forces, from the 15th of November to the 25th of December, 1795, both inclusive, and which had not been made good by Parliament."

Mr. GREY said it was a little extraordinary, that, in the accounts on the table, the dates of warrants, at the time the particular sums became due, of which this sum was composed, were not specified. The House ought to have these documents perfect before them, otherwise they could not know that, of these sums, many of them ought not to have been included in former accounts, when former estimates were laid before the House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said it was very possible it might be material to lay the dates before the House in cases of this kind.— But the reason why this had not been done, was, that the whole time to which the account referred, as it stood, was little more than six weeks, and therefore perhaps the dates had not been thought

necessary. At the same time, if the dates were considered material, he had not the smallest objection to producing them.

Mr. GREY said, he apprehended that in point of fact, the expence might eventually appear neither to have been incurred or paid within that period. For he remembered an account laid before the House as this might be, and which was from the 25th of December, 1794, to the 25th of December, 1795; and afterwards it appeared, when the warrants came to be seen, that it included sums due in January, 1793, almost a year before. There were various other sums, which Mr. Grey recited, that ought to have been included in that account. He was willing to take the right honourable gentleman's word upon the subject; at the same time it was right that the dates of the warrants, when the sums issued, should appear before the House, and perhaps it would be as well not to come to this until all these dates were upon the table.

Mr. STEELE said, that this account was only a statement of what was really incurred, and paid by the Paymaster-General, and this was the form in which these statements had always been made up.

Mr. GREY did not say any thing against the account as far as it went, but he wanted the dates of the different warrants. These sums ought to have been stated to the House when they became due, if the Minister knew of them, that the House might be made properly acquainted with the subject.

Mr. STEELE said, that the Paymaster General knew nothing about them, except that the payments were all made within this period, and as such they were stated.

Mr. M. ROBINSON thought that if it was possible, all the dates of the warrants should be given.

The SECRETARY AT WAR said that if these dates were wanted, they might be moved for; but the accounts, as they appeared on the table, were perfectly in form, as far as they went.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that the right honourable gentleman had not taken notice of the observation of his honourable friend. He did not complain of the inaccuracy of the account of the Paymaster General. The word "incurred" was erroneous in these cases: for it did not refer to the time when the sums were actually incurred, but when they became a debt on the Paymaster General. The point of his honourable friend was this, that Ministers knew that warrants had been issued, and the money due; that, being aware of the charge actually existing as a charge on the public, they ought to have given to the House an account when it became due

to their knowledge. It might appear hereafter, that the whole of these sums which make up this vote, had been incurred when former accounts were before the House, and if Ministers withheld that account they were to blame, because the House ought to have such accounts as nearly perfect as they could be made.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the accounts as they stood upon the table were sufficient to justify the resolution now proposed. If the dates of the warrants were wanted, gentlemen might move for them, he had not the smallest objection to their being produced.

Mr. GREY moved that the Chairman do now leave the chair for the purpose of having the accounts perfect before this resolution was voted.

That motion was put and negatived.

The resolution moved by the Secretary at War was then put and carried.

The SECRETARY AT WAR then moved, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a sum not exceeding 210,194l. 14s. 11d. be granted to His Majesty for paying the expences of the Ordnance previous to the 31st of December, 1795, not provided for by Parliament."—Passed. He moved another resolution, which being agreed to, and the House resumed, the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

General SMITH moved for the dates of the warrants as mentioned by Mr. Grey; they were ordered to be laid before the House.

*Tuesday, 26th April.*

The House having formed itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of the Report of the Select Committee to whom the Petition of the Clerks of the Secretaries of State's Office, on the loss they must sustain in case the bill now before the House, for regulating the conveyance by post of Printed Votes of Parliament and Newspapers, shall pass into a law;

Mr. CANNING stated in the Committee, that it appeared from the Report that the Clerks in the Offices of the two Secretaries of State would sustain a considerable diminution of emolument, were the bill allowed to pass, as it would dispossess them of a privilege which they had hitherto enjoyed of franking Newspapers, and the printed Votes of Parliament; and for this loss, he submitted it to the Committee that it would be proper to grant them a fair compensation. On a former occasion, when they were deprived of one of their privileges, they got an indemnifica-

tion of 1000*l*. This privilege was of considerably greater value, but they had agreed to accept of this sum, at the same time, they by no means pledged themselves by petitioning for this indemnification, not to oppose the bill in a future stage. He moved, that the sum of 1000*l*. annually, be given to His Majesty, to be distributed among the Clerks in the Offices of the two Secretaries of State, as a compensation for the loss they may sustain, from this bill passing into a law.

Mr. BOUVERIE objected to the Committee voting an indemnification for a loss which had not yet been sustained.

Mr. Canning said, that the indemnification was merely provisional, and if the bill was thrown out, the resolution of the Committee would never take effect.

Mr. HARRISON opposed the Resolution, as a part of the bill which would saddle the country with an expence of 1000*l*. a year.

Mr. FRANCIS resisted the proposition upon the ground of its being informal in the House of Commons to pass a positive resolution upon a hypothetical case.

Mr. Chancellor PITT endeavoured to obviate the objection in point of form. It was agreed on all hands, that it was fair and reasonable, if the bill passed, to grant the indemnification along with it. This, however, was done in the most regular mode, by voting an instruction to the Committee upon the bill, to receive a clause to this effect; and there could be no danger in this mode of proceeding, for if the bill did not pass, this clause, which would form a part of the bill, would of course, become ineffective.

Mr. CANNING urged it upon the Committee, that this was merely a provisional indemnification for a possible loss, and if the loss was not sustained, the indemnification would never be granted.

The Resolution was agreed to by the Committee, and the report ordered to be received to-morrow.

Mr. CHARLES DUNDAS moved the Order of the Day, which was, for the second reading of the bill for regulating the sale of Corn by weight.

The LORD MAYOR OF LONDON said; he was not against the principle of the bill; but he must state that it would be impossible to comply with the provisions of it in the port of London. He must therefore hereafter propose a clause to make an exception of the port of London in the enactments of this bill.



The bill was then read a second time, and ordered to be committed to a Select Committee.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR called the attention of the House, in pursuance of his notice, to the nature of the relief which he intended to move for in behalf of the Quakers. He did not call in question the facts on which Quakers had been imprisoned on account of conscientious and religious scruples which they had with regard to the mode of their paying Tythes. He did not mean to say any thing as to the wisdom of such scruples. Nor should he propose any thing that would interfere with the first rights of those to whom Tythes were due from Quakers. Nor did he mean to proceed in any other way than he should have proceeded, had he not known what the law was in this case, and had not heard of any case of hardship on individuals. Here the learned Serjeant entered into a detail of his object in the present measure, as well as the History of Acts of Parliament as they had been made from the 7th and 8th of King William downwards. By the religious scruples of the Quakers, they could not make a voluntary payment of Tythes to any persons, however well by the law of the land they might be entitled to it, conceiving it to be contrary to the divine precepts of Holy Writ, and in consequence of these scruples they were subject to very great inconveniencies. This circumstance had struck the Legislature long ago, and therefore, an Act of Parliament passed, which had been the law for the greater part of the present century, whereby the justice of peace might make an order for sale of the defendant's goods who had been found to owe Tythes, and who being a Quaker could not make any voluntary payment; but this extended, however, only to the sum of ten pounds. It had been found, as far as it went, to answer the beneficial purposes for which it was intended. His intention was to follow up the principle of that law, but to take off the limitation which confined it to 10l. and to make it general. No inconvenience would arise from granting to the justice this summary jurisdiction, because an appeal might be had to the quarter sessions, and therefore, let the power be what it may, here it was subject to appeal, and all that he should propose to do in this part of the case, was simply to remove the restraint which confined the jurisdiction to the sum of 10l. There would, however, still remain a case, to which the remedy of the act he alluded to did not apply, and that was when the title was in question. That he proposed to be tried in a court of law, like other titles, and when the question of title shall have been settled, then the mode of obtaining the dues on that title shall return again,

and be subject to the same summary jurisdiction, as if the title had never been in question at all. This would produce the whole remedy upon this branch of the case. He should propose farther to remedy another defect, with regard to the enforcing payment of tythes, that where the party had not goods sufficient in one county, that wherein he shall dwell, to pay all that should be due for litigating the issue, a sequestration shall be issued against his effects, as in other cases, until the demand shall have been fully satisfied. The only beneficial effect of all this would be, that the plaintiff who shall sue for and recover his tythes, shall not be at liberty to make his election and imprison the defendant, while such defendant shall have goods enough to satisfy the demand, because in that election consisted the hardship against the Quaker, for if he was imprisoned for it, he must either be confined for life, although he may have goods to pay, or give up his conscience, and do a deed which he thought against the law of God. Such the Quaker considered the act of voluntary payment of tythes. All they therefore asked was, that while their goods were sufficient to pay tythes, such goods might be taken from them, and that no person claiming tythes from them should have the power to imprison them instead of taking such goods. If the House thought that the provisions which he now stated would be expedient, he was persuaded that the justice and humanity of the House would readily adopt them. None of the rights of property were here invaded; on the contrary, they were protected. Here the learned Serjeant quoted the precedent in an insolvent Act, by which the principle which he now brought forward was established, to shew there was no innovation in the law by what he intended to propose in the Bill, should the House give him leave to bring it in. He had stated thus much of the object for which he meant to move for leave to bring in the bill, because he did not wish to waste the time of the House by bringing in a bill, the nature of which the House did not know, and which afterwards they might think necessary to reject. If he thought it to be of that description, he would not move for it. Having stated this, he should say he had stated all that the Quakers desired to be stated on their part. There was, however, another subject which, although the Quakers did not desire it, (some few, indeed, desired otherwise) he found it his duty to state to the House. This was the present restriction in taking the affirmation of Quakers. By the law as it stood now, they could not be examined on their affirmation in any but civil actions. He was not able to see the wisdom of the distinction. By examination of them on affirmation in civil cases,

the benefit of their testimony was confined to the interest of private individuals, who are the suitors of the Courts of Justice. By taking their affirmation in criminal cases, the public would be benefited by their testimony. He had known some important failures in the administration of justice in consequence of this restriction. He should, therefore, propose that Quakers should be examined on their affirmation in criminal cases, subject as now they are in civil cases to all the consequences of perjury. These were all the points which he intended to be comprehended in the measure which he had the honour to submit to the House. He then moved "That leave be given to bring in a bill for the farther relief of the people called Quakers, as to the imprisonment of their persons, and for making their solemn affirmation receivable in criminal cases."

Mr. WILBERFORCE seconded the motion, and expressed his hearty approbation of the principle which actuated his learned friend.

Mr. FRANCIS was as desirous as any man to give every possible relief and protection to persons who were really and sincerely scrupulous, in a religious sense, about paying tythes. His doubt was, whether, in some cases, these scruples may not be professed where they are not seriously felt, for ostentation or for merit, in hopes to pass for victims or martyrs with their sect: and then, generally, whether it may not deserve consideration how far it may be safe and prudent for the Legislature to encourage the profession or plea of religious scruples against obedience to the laws; how far that indulgent principle ought to be carried, and by what general limits it ought to be confined in its application. With respect to the other object of the learned gentleman, viz. "to accept of the affirmation of Quakers in criminal cases, as it is at present in civil suits," he gave it his entire approbation. Undoubtedly the public ought to have the benefit of their evidence as well as individuals. He confided very much in the learned gentleman's learning and judgment; and, he hoped, he will take an opportunity of giving the House his thoughts on the principle of the question generally, that is, on the indulgence due to tender consciences, when opposed to positive laws, and how far it should be extended.—In the mean time, he agreed with the learned gentleman entirely in his present views, as far as they go, and heartily approved of his bringing in the bill.

Mr. MARTIN thanked the learned gentleman for this proceeding, and joined with him most heartily. He was happy that

it fell into such able hands, to do justice to this deserving and meritorious body of people.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that he should also be unwilling to give extraordinary indulgence to scruples that are not sincere, but he wished to observe that there was no temptation here for persons to pretend to scruples falsely, for by so doing they would be subject to much more rigour with regard to tythes than if they did not pretend to them. He thought, therefore, the number would not be great, of those who pretend to scruples which would subject them to inconvenience.

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN approved highly of the proposed regulations, and thought they would be equally beneficial to the Quakers and those entitled to tythes. He hoped, however, that time would be given to consider the subject maturely.

Mr. LECHMERE said that the Quakers were a most orderly and quiet set of people, and highly deserving any immunity that would render them comfortable. He had never heard that any Quaker who had behaved well had been under the necessity of applying to the parish, or reduced to seek relief from subscription.

Mr. WIGLEY believed the scruples of the Quakers sincere, and he expected the greatest advantages from the bill proposed.

Leave was given *nem. con.* and Mr. Serjeant Adair, Mr. Wilberforce, the Attorney General, and Mr. Abbot, were appointed to prepare and bring in the bill.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, on the slave carrying bill.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that what he now meant to propose went merely to make some alteration in the number of slaves that were carried, in order to prepare the islands for abolition, which was so great an object with many. He wished to render the slaves somewhat dearer, in order to encourage the good treatment of them, and to prevent any new settlements of them being formed. By this means a total abolition might be effected in the manner most desired by many gentlemen in the House. He therefore would move that the number of slaves to a ton should be limited to one for every ton, when the tonnage of the ship was 200, and four for every five ton above that quantity of tonnage. And likewise that no more ships should be allowed to enter into the trade than those now engaged in it; and he proposed that the blanks in the bill should be filled up with that proportion. He said, he hoped that this would amount eventually to a prohibition.

General TARLETON was surprised, he said, to find a motion

of this importance brought forward at this late period of the session, as it was in fact tantamount to a prohibition, as those few restrictions would render the importation of slaves so expensive, that the merchants and planters would not be able to fill up the chasms to which the honourable gentleman adverted. There was no complaint of cruelty against the captain or sailor to justify, in his opinion, those new restrictions.

Mr. JENKINSON considered the motion, if carried, as nothing more than a tax on slaves: he professed himself to be well inclined to any matter of regulation, but was decidedly against any measure that went to abolition. He wished that the African ships could be sent under the charge of an Admiral, who might superintend the conduct of the captains of vessels, and also that there should be Governors fixed in particular places on the coast of Africa for a similar purpose.

Mr. RYDER was for the proposed regulations, he did not understand that the slave carrying bill had produced the desired effect to a great extent. He said, that from a paper which was put into his hand by an honourable friend (Mr. Rose); for the last three years, the loss per cent in the importation of slaves from the coast of Africa, by mortality, was estimated at 16 the first, 17 the second, and 18 the last. The diminution therefore of the mortality, by allowing greater tonnage, would be an advantage instead of a loss to the merchants and planters; and he conceived this the most lenient of all other modes of accomplishing an abolition.

Mr. ROSE did not object to the regulation respecting tonnage, if it would prevent mortality among the slaves. He said that the paper alluded to, had been put by himself into the hands of the honourable gentleman; but the number of deaths had not been fairly stated, as it was only in the slaves from certain parts, that the mortality was so great as described. In some it had only been 4 per cent., some one; so as little to exceed the ordinary calculations of mortality among other men.

General TARLETON said, since a paper was alluded to, on which argument was founded, it should be properly brought before the House.

Mr. DUNDAS said; that he had never seen the paper that had been mentioned, and if any argument were to be founded on it, it should be regularly moved for. He perfectly concurred in the object of the propositions so far as they went to improve the situation of the middle passage, but he was startled when he heard that they were directed to abolition. With regard to the prohibition of new ships entering the trade, it must depend upon the fact, whether

many new ships had lately entered, or whether the present ships were old in the trade and would soon be unfit for service. His approbation or disapprobation would be regulated exactly as this fact turned out. He thought, since they were at variance in their statement of facts, they should wait for correct information. He cautioned the honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) against attempting indirectly to effect the abolition, or loading the present bill with clauses that would occasion opposition that might prove fatal to it both in this and the other House, and thus defeat a measure about which all were agreed, and from which much advantage had accrued.

Mr. BARHAM opposed the propositions, and stated that the islands would not be averse from abolition moderately and prudently conducted.

Mr. FRANCIS said, he would give his cordial assent to any measure that would ameliorate the condition of the unfortunate Africans. From a cursory view of the statement, he drew an average, that mortality was at least a loss of nine or ten per cent. This was an argument that should induce the House to reconsider the fact; for if a saving occurred by the diminished mortality, that saving would recompence the planters and merchants for what they might suffer by any additional expence. Mr. Francis said that from the average in the cargoes of ships from all parts of the coast, the average of deaths was 6 per cent. He did not think that the propositions went to abolition.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that his honourable friend did not intend by these propositions indirectly to aim at abolition, for he believed such a design as that of effecting it, by any indirect means, would prove nugatory. The planters certainly had an interest in the lives of the slaves, and this motion was for the humane purpose of saving their existence. The convicts in this country, whom our laws had adjudged guilty, and deserving of comfort, were more comfortably transported than those wretched slaves, whom we could not presume to recognize in a guilty point of view.

Mr. DUNDAS wished the paper to be laid on the table, on which a good deal seemed to be founded, and that the chairman should report progress, that they might be able to take up the subject with full information.

Progress was accordingly reported, and the Committee to sit further on Friday.

Mr. ROSE then moved that an account be laid before the House of the number of slaves shipped and landed in the West-India islands, stating the numbers that had died, and the particular parts of Africa from which they were shipped.



Mr. ROSE observed, that the account could not be accurate, but with regard to Jamaica, by reason of the situation in which the other islands had lately been.

Sir W. DOLBEN said that he saw great inconveniences arising from the African trade being in the hands of individuals, and would take some opportunity this session of stating his sentiments on this subject to the House. He was an old man, but he hoped to have an opportunity, before he departed this life, of giving his vote again for a total abolition.

Several public accounts respecting the number of ships employed in the slave trade, and other particulars relating to the same, were presented to the House, and ordered to be laid on the table.

The House resolved itself into a Committee on the bill for allowing a certain duty on the stamping of the lining of hats to be granted to His Majesty.

Mr. MARTIN asked if a person wearing a hat without a lining was liable?

Mr. ROSE said the words were for any person wearing a hat without a lining properly stamped.

Mr. W. SMITH asked whether a person getting a hat new lined would be liable to the tax?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that those who paid the tax to any considerable amount were not likely to be in the practice of new lining their hats; and where the hat was of inferior price, economy would not be obstructed by the trifling additional duty.

A clause was brought up, by which the owner of a hat is compelled to prove that his hat paid the duty.

The House was then resumed, and the report ordered to be received to-morrow.

The loan-bill Committee was deferred till to-morrow; and General SMITH recommended to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a clause to prevent the Executive Government from raising certain sums, which the wording of the Resolution on which the bill was founded, seemed to imply, contrary to what was the intention of the House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied that it was for this reason he had deferred the Committee.

*Wednesday, 27th April.*

Sir WATKIN LEWES moved for leave to bring in a bill to enable His Majesty to license as a summer-theatre the house in Wellclose-square, in the liberty of the Tower Hamlets.

Mr. MAINWARING observed, it would be extraordinary if

the House should agree to passing a bill of this kind, after they had refused the very same thing, when he moved it a few years ago. At all events such a matter as this deserved much more consideration than could be expected to be given to it in so thin a House; and at least he hoped the worthy Alderman would postpone the consideration of the motion for a few days, and therefore he moved that the debate upon this subject should be adjourned to Monday next.

Sir WATKIN LEWES thought it a little extraordinary that the honourable gentleman, who had been so strenuous an advocate for the measure some time ago, should now be so ready to oppose even its introduction; however, he had no objection to its being discussed in a fuller House, and therefore he should not oppose the adjournment of it to Monday.

The Report of the Committee for allowing 1000*l.* a year between the Clerks of the Secretary of State's offices, as a compensation to them for the loss they may sustain in consequence of the passing of a bill now depending for the regulation of printed votes of Parliament and newspapers, was brought up and read.

Mr. JEKYLL had no desire to oppose the granting of this compensation, but he wished to be informed whether the Report of the Committee who took into consideration the subject of the salaries and emoluments of these gentlemen, had ever been considered and acted upon by the Executive Government.

Mr. Chancellor PITT answered the affirmative, and said, that many of the recommendations of that Committee had been acted upon. Some things had been done contrary to the opinion of those Commissioners, but on the whole the Executive Government had done what appeared to them to be the most beneficial for the public, and many very salutary as well as economical regulations had taken place in the Post Office.

The resolution of the Committee for this conditional allowance to the Clerks was then read and agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved the order of the day, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider farther of ways and means for raising a supply.

The House having formed itself into a Committee accordingly,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he would only trouble the Committee with two words upon the proposition which he meant to submit to them, instead of the bill for a tax on dogs, which had been thrown out. On every assessed house, where there was a spaniel, setter, or greyhound kept, he proposed that a tax of five shillings should be imposed on every such dog. In every assessed house where a dog of any other description was kept, he would pro-

pose, that the tax should be only three shillings, except where more than one was kept, in which case it should be five shillings. That a poor person, not paying assessed taxes, and who kept only one dog, should pay no tax for such dog; but if he kept more than one, he should pay three shillings a year for each dog. Or if he kept a greyhound, hound, pointer, setter, or spaniel, he shall pay five shillings for each of them. And that the whole produce of these taxes shall be brought to the public revenue.

Mr. DENT objected to the idea of unassessed houses being allowed to keep a dog without paying the tax, as such regulation would render the tax useless as a source of revenue, while it would not diminish the increasing evil of hydrophobia, arising from the vast number of dogs.

Mr. JOLLIFE opposed the Resolution, on the ground of its tending to impose a partial tax.

Mr. BUXTON was averse to the plan of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Captain BARCLAY was afraid that exempting the poor from paying the tax, would be attended with bad consequences.

Mr. COURTENAY professed his warmest approbation of the resolution. It was not, indeed, so comprehensive as Mr. Dent's bill had been, and he accounted for that circumstance in this way, that the present was the production of a wary experienced financier, whereas the other was the proposition of a raw adventurous speculator, who, in the heat of his fancy, was apprehensive of a hydrophobia extending even to his property. He had considered for some time, after he saw the last bill, where its author could have found the idea by which it was suggested. After ruminating for a long time, it occurred to him that he might have found it in the 110th page of Baron Munchausen's Travels, where the Baron tells a story, that one night being disturbed in his sleep, he rose and went into his wardrobe, where he found that his fur cloak had been bit by a mad dog; that it had communicated the infection to all his other clothes, and that his whole wardrobe was in such a state of tumult, that he was obliged to send for a Justice of Peace to quell the riot. This story, however, he could have informed the honourable gentleman, was only meant as a joke by the Baron.

Mr. DENT replied, that if the honourable gentleman would erect a stage in Bartholemew Fair, and take another gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) who had sported his wit upon the bill on a former night, for his Merry Andrew, their joint efforts might bring them a good deal of money.

Mr. COURTENAY hoped that Mr. Dent would never be re-

duced to such a situation, for though he himself might make some money, he was afraid the honourable gentleman would starve.

Lord SHEFFIELD was adverse to the exception in favour of the poor, because the comfort of a dog was very inferior to those of more importance to them, which they were denied.

General MACLEOD asked if the produce of the tax was expected to fall short, or to exceed the former estimate of 100,000l.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that he expected it would considerably exceed that sum, as by the present resolution he had taken nothing from, but on the contrary, had added considerably to the means on which he had formed that estimate.

Mr. SOMNER moved as an amendment to the resolution, that all dogs, whether kept in assessed or unassessed houses, shall pay a tax of three shillings.

The Committee divided,

For the resolution, 52; Against it, 29.—Majority, 23.

The House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR brought up the bill for the relief of the respectable Society called Quakers.

Mr. I. HAWKINS BROWNE expressed a wish, that some clause might be introduced in the bill, to exclude those from the benefits of the bill who may call themselves Quakers, as many who were excluded from that community, might assume the character in order to avail themselves of the bill.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR said, that he would consider himself obliged by any information which any gentleman might please to give on the measure, but observed, that those who put themselves in that situation, would place themselves in one much worse, by such an assumption of character, than any other subject in the country, Quakers alone excepted. Besides, the same penalty would attach to a breach of their affirmation, as attaches now to the breach of another man's oath.

The bill was ordered to be read a second time on Monday, and printed for the use of the Members.

The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 28th April.*

The report of the Committee on the Hat-duty bill was brought up.

Mr. SMITH considered it not so much a duty on hats, as on hat-linings. He said he had conversed with a number of dealers in hats by retail, who were of one opinion, that the duty would be

evaded, unless the stamp was put upon the hat itself, by the hat-maker at the dye-house. He also objected, that as about three-fourths of the hats sold were relined, which lining did not cost above 1s. and as the duty upon this lining would be 2s. this would be in fact to make gentlemen pay the duty over again for the same hat, as often as they had a fresh lining, which he apprehended was not the design of the framers of this bill.

Mr. Chancellor PITT stated, that the idea suggested by the honourable gentleman of stamping the hats was the original intention when the Hat Duty was first proposed, but that it had been given up in consequence of the remonstrance of the hat manufacturers, that, by injuring the hat, it would affect their trade. The plan of fixing the stamp upon the lining rather than the hat could make no difference to the wearer; and if, as the honourable gentleman had suggested, they were chiefly the finer hats which were new lined, such gentlemen as had their hats re-lined and dressed to look like new ones, could think it no great hardship to pay the duty of two shillings.

The bill was then ordered to be engrossed, and read a third time to-morrow.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that there be laid before the House an account, stating the amount of all the navy and transport bills from the 1st of February 1795, to the 30th of December 1795, with the interest on the same up to the 5th of April 1796. When these accounts were laid before the House, it was his intention to make a motion for funding the bills.

In a Committee of the House on the Landed Estate Succession duty bill, Mr. Sylvester Douglas in the chair,

Mr. SHERIDAN wished to know, whether this tax would affect, in its operation, persons resident in this country, and leaving legacies, who might have their property in the French, American, or other foreign funds?

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that there was no great danger to be apprehended from any present inducement for persons to place money in the French funds; and as to other foreign funds, when the expences of commission, &c. were considered, it would more than counterbalance the advantages to be expected, with a view of avoiding the operation of this tax.

The House being resumed, the bill was ordered to be printed, and to be taken into consideration on Thursday next.

On a motion that the House do resolve itself into a Committee on the Curates Maintenance bill,

Mr. JODDRELL said he was of opinion that this was of the

mature of a money bill, and, as such, that it ought to have originated in that House, and not in the House of Lords.

The SPEAKER declared he did not think the present bill was one of that description which would render its originating in the House of Lords any infringement on the privileges of the House of Commons. It laid on no new impost, but merely empowered the Bishop to ascertain the distribution of the money to be allotted for the better maintenance of the Curates.

General SMITH declared that he was not against the principle of the bill, but at the same time had his doubts whether this did not partake of the nature of a money bill, inasmuch as it went to empower the Diocesan to lay a new burden upon the Rector by increasing the salary of the Curate.

The SPEAKER stated, that if any gentleman entertained any doubts upon this point, he would submit whether it would not be advisable to defer the farther consideration of this bill to another day, as he wished the House to be fully satisfied upon the subject.

The Committee on the bill was then deferred till Monday next.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved, that the adjourned debate be resumed, on the motion, That there be laid before the House an account of the number of men destined for the West Indies, to serve under Sir Charles Grey, in the year 1793. The order of the day being read,

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, from the manner in which this subject had come before the House on another occasion, and the manner in which it was then debated, it must be naturally expected that he would enter into an extensive consideration of the business. Circumstanced, therefore, as he was, he found it necessary for him to trespass on the patience and indulgence of the House longer than he would have otherwise wished. With regard to the particular motion before the House, he had certainly no objection; but, in agreeing to that, he did not conceive himself bound to acquiesce in several others which had been moved by the honourable gentleman, who, on a former night, commenced the debate. The detached and desultory manner in which this debate had been conducted, and the many insinuations thrown out against His Majesty's Ministers, must call on him to argue the matter on a more extensive scale than he otherwise intended, in order to manifest that no blame whatever attached to Administration, or to those who conducted His Majesty's Councils. In doing this, he did not despair of shewing, to the satisfaction of the House, that at no one period since the commencement of the war to the present instant, was any one instance of neglect imputable to the Executive Government of this



Country. He hoped, therefore, that the House would excuse him in prefacing his motions by entering into a detail of facts, as far as related to the war in the West Indies. Upon an accurate review of what had already passed, he had the satisfaction to find himself confirmed in the ideas he formerly entertained; and he should consider himself wanting in his duty to himself and to the public, if he did not endeavour to lay before them reasons for that opinion. He was obliged, therefore, to remind the House of the insufficiency of force which this country possessed at the commencement of the war for the extent of operations necessary to be carried on in different quarters, and he wished to impress it on the minds of his audience, that at all periods the exertions of this country had been proportioned to the means. So much care had been taken of the West Indies, that even at the commencement of the war, when a few thousand troops constituted the whole defensive force of the islands, our troops there were augmented by a regiment from Gibraltar, and another from Nova Scotia; and, from the first appearance of hostilities, such orders were given as enabled us to capture almost the whole of the valuable possessions of the enemy in that quarter.—The war began in February, and in April or May, from the orders that had been issued, we acquired the possession of Tobago. He did not quote this, in order to boast of any very great exertions on our part, because our success was aided by the general disposition of the inhabitants, who were eager to shake off their allegiance to the French, but in order to shew that we neglected no opportunity of conquest. We soon afterwards received accounts of the surrender of St. Pierre and Miquelon, which, though they required but small exertions, as our means were then small, tended, however, to prove that there was no omission of any opportunity of advantage. He did not choose to dwell upon other subsequent successes; he would only mention, though he would not dilate upon, the steps taken by Ministers for that purpose, the universal conquest of the possessions of the enemy in the Eastern parts of the world. The very limited force which the Constitution allowed for the internal protection of the country in time of peace, rendered it almost impossible but that some time must elapse before operations could be commenced with effect; but, as early as the end of the year 1793, preparations were made for the expedition under the command of Sir Charles Grey. The force, which it was originally intended to send out under that General, amounted to 10,000 men; but that force was afterwards diminished to 6000, which, with the troops in the West Indies, made together a force of 11,000 men. It was unnecessary for him to enter into a detail of the events that occurred in conse-

quence of that armament ; it was sufficient to say, they were of a nature not easily to be forgotten. But, however, he begged to observe, that Ministers, having judged it necessary to withdraw 4000 men from the troops destined for that expedition, certainly did not expect the same extent of service as if Sir Charles Grey had been furnished with the force originally proposed. That General was accordingly told, that as the force was limited, in the same proportion was the expectation of service decreased. He mentioned this circumstance for two reasons : first, in order to prove, that though Administration found it expedient to withdraw a part of the force, they did not impose so unreasonable a task upon Sir Charles as to ask for the same service as if he had the whole ; and he mentioned it also from the regard he always should entertain for that gallant Officer, to shew, that what was not expected from him he performed, and that, with a diminished force, he achieved conquests which even the most sanguine mind could never have hoped for. Sir Charles Grey certainly disappointed Administration, not in doing less, but in doing more, than they could have expected from the force under his command. He felt much pleasure in stating this, because he never would, while he had a seat in that House, omit an opportunity of doing justice to the meritorious services of that gallant officer. The event of that campaign was known to every body ; it ended in the conquest of all the possessions of the enemy in that quarter of the world. Soon after Sir Charles sailed, favourable accounts were received from St. Domingo, which afforded the prospect of making an impression there, which gave rise to a correspondence between him and that General. He mentioned that as a thing in contemplation, that he might be able to send two more regiments, for the service of the Leeward Islands. He begged here distinctly to state, that after the conclusion of that campaign, which terminated in the month of May, Sir Charles Grey entertained no uneasiness whatever for the security of the conquests he had made ; that he was confident of retaining them, and in that state of mind he was in the beginning of June, when he heard of the attack made by the French upon Guadaloupe.— He was desirous to express himself distinctly upon this point, because gentlemen on the other side seemed anxious, the other day, to put words into his mouth upon this part of the subject, which he never used. But he would say more, at that very period, when he stated Sir Charles to be under no uneasiness for the safety of the West Indies, he had no expectations of reinforcement, farther than the one or two regiments he before mentioned. He admitted, that in April, 1794, Sir Charles did express a wish for the reinforce-

ments ; but in his (Mr. Dundas's) answer, he did not lead that General to look for any reinforcement before the month of November ; therefore, in the opinion he gave of the safety of the islands, he was not actuated by the hope of any reinforcement before that period. Worn out by great exertions in such a climate, Sir Charles wished, after his conquests, to return to England for a certain period of time, and actually prepared to do so.—He hoped that gentlemen would not attempt to put an improper colour upon this part of his speech. He knew that such was the gallantry of that General, that he would not have thought of returning to England, if he imagined there was any danger in the West Indies ; for even after leave had been given him to return, some new difficulties arose in the West Indies, and he directly put off his return. When Sir Charles was making a circuit of the islands, preparatory to his return, he received an account of the attack upon Guadaloupe, and he and Sir John Jervis immediately hastened to the post of danger.—He made his arrangements for an operation of a very important nature, which unfortunately failed. The House had heard of the bad success of the troops under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Doyle, and to that failure were to be attributed, perhaps, our subsequent misfortunes. He did not choose to enter minutely into the causes of that failure, since the best and ablest men are liable to such disasters, and because he would lay Sir Charles's own account of it before the House. After this, having taken such steps as appeared to him sufficient for the security of that island, he came away.

But he should observe here, that Sir Charles sent a detachment of two regiments to St. Domingo, and that afterwards he sent another regiment. He was at that time Commander in Chief, and of course could have used his own discretion upon that point. It was clear as the sun at broad day, and, to put it beyond a doubt, Sir Charles Grey did retain a part of that reinforcement, the 35th regiment : And why did he retain it ? Because he had formed an intention of going down to conquer the settlement of Cayenne, which the moment he heard he could not do without a larger body of effective men than he could muster, he used his own discretion again, and sent that regiment after the other three. In doing so, he acted as a man of sense, and as a man of honour, and as zealous for the service he was engaged in, and he defied any one to draw an insinuation to the contrary. In the course of the summer, however, Sir Charles Grey stated the necessity of reinforcements ; but gentlemen were thoroughly misinformed if they thought Sir Charles Grey founded that demand on the idea of the insecurity of the

islands. No! Warmed by conquest, and desirous to add fresh laurels to those he had already won, he meditated a descent on St. Domingo. He stated his demand for that purpose, and in this situation matters remained when Sir Charles Grey went from the island of St. Christopher's to Guadaloupe, where he experienced all his disappointments and vexation. That was the first and only time Sir Charles Grey sent for reinforcements for the security of the islands. His letter bore date of the 11th of July, and it arrived in England on the 18th of August. Here he desired to call the attention of the House to this urgent requisition, first made by Colonel Coote, and next by Colonel Dundas. Before he began to state his observations, however, upon the requisition, he begged to bring under their view the whole circumstances of the case.— Upon the failure at Point au Pierre, Sir Charles Grey wrote for a reinforcement of 6000 men, 1200 or 2000 of which he requested to be sent out as speedy as possible. At this time the whole of the British forces in Great Britain amounted to no more than 17,475 men, including the sick; yet, notwithstanding, no exertion was omitted in order to give a complete answer to the requisition. The number of effective men was somewhat under 17,000.

Five of the best of the regiments were employed as	Men
marines on board the fleet, comprising	3386
The garrison at Gibraltar contained	5259
A great body of guards was on the continent, to the number of	2911

So that, every species of force included, there were to be deducted	11,556
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The remainder were in England, and now he begged the House to attend to the measures pursued.

On the 17th of August he sent	600
On the 25th of August	2417
On the 4th of September	1700
On the 14th of September	4000
And on the 10th of April, from Guernsey	500
Making in all	9217

So that he did not lose an hour in sending out the 6000 men required. At the same time that he provided these 9217 men, he provided for the service of St. Domingo also, because it hung heavy on Sir Charles Grey's mind, although he was aware that he had not done enough.

On the 4th of September he sent to St. Domingo	1200
On the 19th of September	1800
On the 21st of March	964
And on the 23d of May	2319

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Making in all, to St. Domingo	6283
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So that, adding the reinforcement to the force in the Leeward Islands, of	9217
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The sum total would be	15,500
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These measures were taken immediately ; and he hoped, from a fair and candid consideration of the subject, that gentlemen would allow he had made an extensive provision for the service of the islands, and that he should be no longer accused of criminal neglect. Having put the troops on board the transports, and made every arrangement necessary for their embarkation, it could be hardly imagined that he should capriciously detain them. It was indeed not impossible but that he might have given improper orders so as to occasion their delay ; but after he had given orders for transports to convey them, and for convoy to escort them, when a pressing service demanded their assistance, and his whole heart and soul were engaged in the object of the expedition, he trusted to the candour of the House for his exculpation. The first detachment sailed in October, but afterwards put back on account of contrary winds. He might entertain some unreasonable dissatisfaction in consequence of this unfortunate delay ; but when he examined the journal of the convoy, and found the winds so contrary that the transports could not really proceed, he acknowledged the officer to be entitled to more credit than he was willing to admit in the first instance. Orders were given them, that they should sail the moment the wind changed, when the French fleet left Brest, and put to sea. This was in December, and when our own fleet, after having been cruising about the Channel all the summer, endeavouring to draw the enemy, but to no purpose, had returned into harbour to refit. At this time, he said, the French fleet came out of Brest, and blocked up our ships in their own harbour. Now they came out of Brest, in order to do what ? To capture that very convoy, to be sure ; and therefore orders were given not to fail with means of defence so limited. If Ministers did wrong in issuing those orders, they were responsible for it ; but he reminded the House that this transaction happened at an early period of the war, at a time too when we had a fleet in the Mediterranean, and

another in the West Indies. He observed, that a detachment, however, did sail, to the amount of 5000 men, which was afterwards obliged to disembark four regiments; the remainder sailed on the 15th of February, under Admiral Parker. Orders were given also about the same time for troops, to the amount of between 2 and 3000 men, to sail from Gibraltar, who arrived much sooner than they were expected. So that, upon the whole, the reinforcement was equal to what the most sanguine mind could look for. Three regiments were also ordered from Flushing, and four from the army of the Duke of York; but, out of the three regiments expected from Flushing, they were disappointed of the 74th, which had gone to join the army of the Duke of York before the orders arrived; and the winter of 1794 rendered it impossible that any part of his Royal Highness's army could go. Yet, notwithstanding all this, not a shadow of blame was imputable to Ministers. He admitted that the principal disappointments had been occasioned by the impossibility of sending reinforcements to the West Indies, and that those disappointments tended to blast the whole of the campaign of 1795, and to defeat the views which were then entertained of recovering Guadaloupe, preserving St. Lucia, and guarding against the attacks and calamities which had befallen the islands of St. Vincent and Grenada; but still he would insist that this delay proceeded from no neglect of exertions in himself, or his coadjutors in office. He had sometimes heard Ministers accused with patience, and oftentimes with anger. When he preserved silence, it was because the public service would not admit any attempt at exculpation, and if he lost his patience, it was to be attributed to circumstances of provocation, which no man scarcely could resist. He now left the House to judge, whether he had ever shunned inquiry from personal apprehensions; and having gone through the whole of the statement necessary for the conduct of 1794 and 1795, he came now to speak of the last expedition, which, as it was in some degree pending, he must mention with more reserve.

About the beginning of the year 1795, it became necessary to form a plan for the campaign of the next season, which, from the situation of Guadaloupe, St. Vincent's, and Grenada, was extremely difficult. But in forming this plan, it became necessary to take into consideration another important event which then took place, viz. the conquest of Holland by the French. Judge then what Ministers were to do in the competition of services. At that critical period, the whole force in this country that could be applied to any active and foreign service was not more than betwixt 3 and 4000 men, though he knew there were more than that number upon

paper. This country was never afraid, though it may have been alarmed. It may have been sensible of its danger, which was an act of prudence, and such was its apprehension then. It was not therefore advisable to send any considerable force from it at that period; but in the view of securing the Cape of Good Hope, he did advise His Majesty to send 3 or 4000 men to that quarter. If that expedition had been unsuccessful, he was aware that his advice would have been deservedly considered as rash, and unfounded; but fortunately the reverse had happened. That attempt succeeded. They unlocked the door of the East Indies—they took the key, and he hoped would always keep it, and that no man would venture to give it up. At the end of May, or the beginning of June last, there did not remain an efficient force in the country to send to the West Indies: the army on the continent had not returned, and without the aid of this force, it was impossible to carry on offensive operations there. Upon the return of the Duke of York's army in June last, the remainder of 32 regiments amounted to 11,346 men; added to this were the new regiments, amounting to 19,838; in all, to 31,194 men. Out of these, it became necessary, according to the best military advice which could be obtained, to form two distinct armies for the West Indies, one of 15,000, and the other of 12,000 men, amounting in all to 27,000 effective men. Upon these materials, Ministers in the course of last summer founded their exertions; and he would venture to say, that with such materials laid before military men, they would have judged it impossible to make the necessary preparations in the given time; the nation was indebted for the uncommon exertions which were made to that zeal and love for his country which actuated the illustrious personage who held the rank of Commander in Chief. After these regiments had been examined and appointed, with a view to the West-India expedition, it was found that few of them comparatively could be sent with advantage upon that service; it therefore became necessary to reduce and draft the regiments, and in order to this, to bring to one place these regiments, many of which were at a considerable distance in the North, and other parts of the country. To accomplish this, several of the regiments were ordered to proceed by sea to the place of rendezvous, and met with delays proceeding from contrary wind (for from the North two winds were necessary to bring them to the Downs, and from thence to Portsmouth.) Under such disadvantages was this force collected; the exertions of the noble Commander in Chief were indefatigable; and with such circumstances as he had stated, he would appeal to any military man, whether it was possible to prepare such a force,



and have it ready to sail earlier than November. He stated the force which was actually prepared and failed, to amount to 22,929 men; besides which were to be added 1000 German riflemen to be brought from the Elbe, about 2000 from Gibraltar, and about 6000 foreign troops, exclusive of dismounted cavalry, added to the black corps and militia of the islands; in all about 30,000 men. Mr. Dundas mentioned the delays occasioned by contrary winds to the transportation of these German and foreign troops. Besides this, the ordnance service required extensive preparations. The department at Woolwich, which was adapted for ordinary demands, was greatly insufficient for one of so extraordinary a nature and upon so large a scale. The preparations then, though put into a train of the greatest activity, could proceed but gradually; and afterwards, two winds were wanted to carry the transports from the Thames to Portsmouth. A storm unhappily took place when the vessels were in the Downs, by which many of them were dismasted. Considering all these circumstances, Mr. Dundas insisted that no blame of delay could be imputed to His Majesty's Ministers, when the nature, the extent, and the unavoidable difficulties, attending the execution of the service were taken into consideration. But this was not all: in addition to what he had already stated, was also to be considered the collection of transports. When preparations for this service first began, there did not remain more than 40,000 tons of transports, in so many other and important previous services had the transport vessels been engaged. At this time too, when transports to such a large extent were necessarily to be prepared, the commerce of the country (contrary to what generally happens during a state of war) was in a situation of most unexampled prosperity; provisions, which were to be procured, were become extremely dear; seamen for these transport vessels were collected with difficulty proportioned to the number of men wanted, the large bounties given for manning the navy, as well as the flourishing state of our commerce, and the encouragement held out to sailors on board trading vessels. These were some of the difficulties to be encountered in fitting out such a number of transport vessels, to the amount of 60,000 tons. It was easy for gentlemen to censure, but he wished them first to pause and consider the almost impossibility of collecting such a quantity of shipping under such disadvantages. If they still persisted in their censures, he must say, that such persons must either have minds incapable of taking these various difficulties and details into consideration, or must be completely ignorant of subjects of this nature. To alleviate the difficulty which occurred in this part of the service, two

extraordinary resources presented themselves, the timely arrival of the East and West-India fleets, and without having had recourse to these, it would have been absolutely impossible to carry the plan of service into execution with any regard to the commerce of the country, or the number of seamen that were wanted for the men of war. But even after these commercial fleets arrived, time was necessary for the unloading of their cargoes, and for transacting the necessary business at the Custom House and Treasury. These circumstances occasioned a great and necessary delay; and, after all, two winds were necessary in order to carry these ships from the Thames to Spithead; delays occasioned from this last circumstance repeatedly happened. Amidst all these difficulties and disadvantages, the Commissioners of the transport service made unbounded exertions, and he would appeal to the candor of any unprejudiced person, if greater expedition was practicable, or greater zeal and activity in the service could have been manifested. A charge, indeed, had been made that the transports were too much crowded, and that from negligence in providing the necessary accommodations on board, sickness among the troops ensued. The charge of being negligent in this instance, was, in his view, the same with being intentionally guilty; but he insisted that no precautions had been neglected to prepare whatever was necessary, either for the health or accommodation of the troops. The subject had been formerly agitated, and he trusted that perfect satisfaction had been given on this head, and that it had been clearly proved that every requisite accommodation had been afforded to the troops, and that they were not unnecessarily detained on board the transports for any length of time. If this charge was meant to be renewed, it ought to have been before Admiral Christian sailed, to whom every confidential detail, as to the superintendence of this business, had been referred, and whilst he remained at home to give the necessary information. An honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) had, in the course of a former night's debate, stated to the House a strange variety of facts, on which he attempted to ground an accusation against His Majesty's Ministers. It would have certainly been more becoming in that honourable gentleman to have previously suggested those facts to the consideration of Ministers, who might have satisfied him on the subject, and might have even taken measures to remedy the complaints which were grounded on those facts. He always made it a custom, and while he had the honour of a seat in His Majesty's Council, he would pursue the same line of conduct—to throw open his doors in order to receive every suggestion that might promote the public interest; but he thought it his duty more particularly to do

to in a case where the lives of those gallant men, employed in the defence of their country, were at stake. Every attention should be paid to men of that laudable description, and he who refused to fulfil a duty so extremely incumbent on him, was, in his opinion, unworthy the character of a man. With respect to any correspondence that might have passed between him and the Transport Board, on the subject of the West-India expedition, he was at all times ready to lay it before the House. He had, for the purpose of facilitating that expedition, put himself in possession of every possible information, and had taken care to collect it in a mass for the benefit of his successors in the department which he had the honour to fill. A code of regulations had been framed under his direction, in consequence of that information, which would be found highly useful in the transportation of troops; and he was ready to submit them to the inspection of any gentleman in the House. He would confess that he was very much indebted to Sir Jerome Fitzpatrick, for his communications relative to the mode of preserving the health of troops on board of transports. He had conversed with that gentleman on the subject, and had found much useful matter in his observations. Sir Jerome had, by his recommendation, been appointed Inspector-General of the army on board transports, and the benefits resulting from that appointment were considerable. To prove that no care or expence had been spared by Government in providing, in every point of view, for the accommodation of the troops, and every other matter which related to the welfare of the armament, he should beg leave to read a letter from the Commander in Chief, Sir Ralph Abercrombie. [Mr. Dundas here read the letter, which stated, that every necessary preparation had been made on the best and largest scale for the success of the expedition; that the Hospital Staff, and all the regulations for the accommodation of the men in health or sickness were most unexceptionable.]—He next thought it proper to notice what had been thrown out by the honourable gentleman opposite to him, in former debates, respecting the great want of accommodation for the troops on board the vessels which were to proceed to the West Indies from Corke. To refute any imputations of that nature, he should also read a letter from the Commanding Officer, General Wright, dated the 11th of November, 1795.—[Mr. Dundas also read this letter, which, in substance, contradicted the reports which had been circulated, of the miserable situation of the troops on board the transports at Corke, and expressly mentioned, that at no period were there any forces better provided with medicines and every other accommodation.] He was happy to be able to state to the House, that of all the tran-

sports which had sailed from this country to the West Indies, four only were missing; that 67 had safely arrived at Barbadoes, containing above 7000 regular troops, with artillery, &c. &c. and that of the 7000 only the small number of 400 were in a sickly state, who were, when the last accounts came away, recovering rapidly, and would be soon fit for action. He trusted, when he mentioned these statements, that he should be considered as conveying happy tidings to the House. [A general cry of hear! hear!] He was confident, that after the severe and repeated hurricanes to which the fleet had been exposed, after the various hardships and vexatious disappointments it had undergone, it was a matter of sincere congratulation to the country that the exertions of Government had at length been attended with success; and he did not hesitate to believe that gentlemen were completely satisfied, that every necessary measure had been taken to ensure a successful issue to the expedition by His Majesty's Ministers. He could not in the present stage of the business proceed without doing that justice, which his feelings prompted him, with respect to the Transport and Ordnance Boards. If he had on former occasions spoken rather warmly of these Boards—if his feelings had at any time urged him to express himself rather too freely of their conduct, he was then happy to do them that justice, in a public and solemn manner, which he conceived they had a right to expect from any sudden warmth into which he had formerly been led:—he would therefore declare, that every possible exertion had taken place on their part, and that the armament could not have been ready at an earlier period than it actually was. He would even go farther, and maintain, that at no one period in the history of the country, was any armament of so great a magnitude, equipped and put into a state of complete readiness in so short a space of time. The reasons which influenced him to make all those statements which he had the honour to lay before the House, were, that he might clearly shew, to the satisfaction of those gentlemen, who were really candid, that there were not sufficient, nor in fact any grounds whatever, to call for an inquiry; for it was evident, that it was not merely enough to call for an inquiry, something more was requisite; it was incumbent on the honourable gentleman to prove the necessity of going into it, by sufficient evidence and strong facts. He concluded by appealing to the House, whether he had not laid before them sufficient proofs and incontrovertible reasons for them to form an opinion, *prima facie*, that there was no ground to go into the inquiry proposed by the honourable gentleman, nor to censure the Executive Government for its management of the West-India expedition, or its negligence with respect to the safety of the islands. He apologized to the House for having troubled them so

long on a subject which so materially related to himself, and said he should bring forward some motions relative to the production of papers on the general subject, while he also intended to oppose some of the honourable gentleman's motions, and amend some others.

Mr. GREY said, that he conceived it would have been much more regular, had the right honourable gentleman laid the papers upon the table, from which information upon the subject was to be obtained, before he went into so wide a field of discussion. For his own part, as he had formerly stated, he did not know that he should take any share in a debate on this subject, and at present he only rose on account of the allusion that had been made to the opinion of a character whom it was his duty to respect and honour. He could wish, that before any argument was founded upon an opinion of that person, every document which was necessary to explain the nature of that opinion, and the circumstances in which it was given, should be produced. It was said that Sir Charles Grey had pronounced the Leeward Islands to be in perfect security; but he was authorized by that person to say, that he had given this opinion in the confidence that no force could be sent out of the ports of France, and proceed to the West Indies, till the reinforcements that had been promised arrived. It had been fairly admitted by the right honourable gentleman, that Sir Charles Grey, in detaching the regiments to Jamaica and Barbadoes, had exercised that discretion which belonged to him; but he could likewise say, that in exercising this discretion, Sir Charles Grey understood that he was complying with the wishes of Administration. He had applied for reinforcements, which he expected would speedily arrive; and with the force which the enemy then possessed in that quarter, and in the confidence that no troops would be allowed to join them from Old France, he had pronounced the situation of the Leeward Islands to be such as to afford no ground for apprehension. It had likewise been candidly stated by the right hon. gentleman, that Sir Charles Grey would not have availed himself of the leave he had obtained to return home to repair the injuries his constitution had suffered from the severe exertions of an arduous campaign in an inhospitable climate, if he had not been convinced of the security of the islands, and this his conduct, when he was apprised of their danger, sufficiently proved. After the disaster that had taken place, he applied for 6000 men, 2000 of which he demanded immediately. Of the cause of the disaster he would not say any thing at all; certain it was, that though applied for in June, no reinforcement had arrived in the end of November. At the desire of his honoured relation, he had stated thus much, and would again re-

peat his wish, that the whole transactions might be laid before the public, that they might have sufficient information to decide upon the merits of his conduct.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that he had never come down to the House with less expectation of hearing a long speech, or with less intention of making one himself; and he never was more surprised than at the manner in which the right honourable gentleman had chosen to go into the discussion of this subject. As he had wished that every document necessary to afford accurate information should be produced, in order to form the basis of the discussion, he deprecated the idea of the right honourable gentleman reading official papers not regularly before the House, for the authenticity of which the right honourable gentleman would have credit, and which he had brought forward in this way, to make that impression upon the House which might obstruct the effect of any future consideration of the subject, more regularly introduced. The right honourable gentleman had perverted the usual mode of proceeding. He had gone into the papers before they were submitted to the House, made his defence before he was accused, and stated his exculpatory proof before his trial. If he did not, however, say something at present on what the right hon. gentleman had advanced, the impression he meant to make on the House would be fixed. The papers might be produced; but before they were printed, and the discussion fairly brought forward, many delays might intervene, and the right honourable gentleman might refer to the present debate as a full exculpation of his conduct. It had been said, that upon this subject he had spoken in a churlish manner, which, indeed, he did not recollect to have employed, and which certainly was not usual with him. Still, however, he must avow, that with whatever good humour he might be disposed to treat his Majesty's Ministers, particularly the right honourable gentleman, that as political characters he wished to have no intercourse with them, but across the table of the House of Commons. The honourable gentleman had, indeed, kindly invited him to communications of a more private nature, to pay a visit at the Horse Guards, where he believed, too, a bottle of excellent wine might be presented; yet he must decline such intercourse, as it would betray a degree of political coquetry, the suspicion of which he did not wish to incur. He had, it was true, on particular occasions, that of Muir and Palmer, and another young gentleman, waited privately upon the right hon. gentleman in his official capacity, and he would confess, that if he were to be upon such terms with his Majesty's Ministers, the right hon. gentleman would be the person with whom he would be desirous to commu-

nicate. In his former speech, he had declared that he had no private communication on the subject of West-India affairs with that gallant commander, of whom the right hon gentleman had spoken so highly; and if the circumstances of his political connexion might be supposed to have afforded him opportunities of conversation upon these subjects, he would say again, that upon such occasions he had carefully abstained from entering upon it, and he believed that person would have known his duty better than to have divulged any part of the expedition in which he had been officially engaged. As to the instructions of that officer, he had only reasoned hypothetically, not from precise information. He thought he had some right to complain of the right hon. gentleman for the manner in which he came forward with this information. The honourable gentleman had, in the whole course of his argument, assumed that the papers, for which he intended to move, would be granted; and certainly he had a right to suppose that any motion, coming from that side of the House, was more likely to be carried, than a motion from another quarter. He would not be at all surprized, however, that after his papers were moved for, the production of them should be opposed by influence even more powerful in that House than the right hon. gentleman's, and that an honourable friend of his would come forward, acknowledging that it was a truly noble display of personal ingenuousness, but that it would be incompatible with the interests of the public service to communicate so much information to the House. Though the right honourable gentleman (said Mr. Sheridan) may have been a rash suggester, he may have a discreet friend near him; nor was it the first time that he had known the openness of one Minister corrected by the discretion of another. From the whole of this speech, however, instead of being satisfied with his defence, he had only been a thousand times more confirmed in his opinion, that the deepest degree of criminality attached to His Majesty's Ministers on account of the manner in which they had conducted the war in the West Indies. After a speech of four hours and a half, the right hon. gentleman had removed no foundation on which he had wished to institute an inquiry. The right hon. gentleman himself confessed, that though he now, from better information, acquitted the various official Boards of any blame, he had originally felt considerable indignation at their conduct; how then could he be surprized that others should feel as he had done, or discover blame where he himself had thought that censure was merited?—The question, however, now was, Whether the right hon. gentleman had succeeded in removing the dissatisfaction which it was



natural should arise on account of the delay in sending reinforcements to the West Indies? It was said that the small establishment of this country, at the beginning of the war, had limited the exertions of Government. This was a language he never heard without alarm. If our former peace establishment was described as miserable, reduced, and contemptible, what idea did it lead us to form of a future peace establishment? To this deplorable state, in which Ministers had found themselves at the beginning of a war with France, particularly in the West Indies, they ascribed the disasters which arose in its course. Sir Charles Grey was to have had 10,000, but set out with only 6000 troops; and from this force, only limited exertions were to be expected, and, as the right hon. gentleman admitted, in the finest language of panegyric, the greatness of the merit of Sir Charles Grey, whose success so far exceeded the most sanguine expectations that could be formed.—Never had he heard the right hon. gentleman celebrate the gallantry and merit of a character with greater warmth; but, from the fineness of the words, he suspected they were borrowed from his right hon. friend near him (Mr. Pitt). It was wonderful, that while he was thus so loudly celebrated in words, that this gallant and meritorious officer was the only person who had not, by the advice of Ministers, received some signal mark of royal favour. He only got fine words, instead of being rewarded with substantial marks of the bounty of the Sovereign. Still, however, he was not without his reward; for he possessed the satisfaction of conscious worth, the admiration of his brethren in arms, and the approbation of his grateful country. While he saw their panegyric thus confined to barren words, he could lay less stress on their approbation. When the troops destined for the West Indies were dispatched under the Earl of Moira, the right hon. gentleman discovers that the state of the country required this sacrifice, and demanded the preference of an important to a less important service. This was not the language held at the time this detachment was made.—Then it was contended, he well remembered, that this detachment would not cripple the exertions in the Leeward Islands; but, perhaps, from the perusal of official papers, the right honourable gentleman's memory was now refreshed. It was said, that only a regiment or two had been promised, and that, beyond this, Sir Charles Grey had no reason to expect reinforcements; but Ministers were not to be acquitted upon this miserable quibble. The quantity of reinforcement was to be measured, not by what Sir Charles Grey had thought necessary in the commencement of his career: when new conquests were achieved, the very nature of things dictated

the necessity of reinforcements to maintain them. Sir Charles did not humbly solicit new reinforcements: the brilliancy and the extensiveness of his acquisitions demanded them, in a language which could not be misunderstood; and it was the duty of Ministers to have provided for what they could not fail to observe would be required. The honourable gentleman had said, that he (Mr. Sheridan) had criminated Sir Charles Grey, by affirming that the detachment of troops to Jamaica and Barbadoes was improper, and that it was hazarding the safety of the Leeward Islands. But, as his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) had well explained, the conduct of Sir Charles Grey, on that occasion, was influenced by the expectation that reinforcements sufficient for the protection of the Leeward Islands would quickly arrive, and that the French force in the West Indies would gain no accession by reinforcement from Europe.—Without this well-grounded confidence, the conduct of Sir Charles Grey, in making such a detachment, would have been deserving of blame. If the attack in Guadeloupe had been made by troops in the West Indies, when the Commander pronounced the islands in a state of safety, then the fault might have been imputed to him; but if the contrary was the case, the argument of the honourable gentleman was a mere quibble, and the whole guilt devolved upon His Majesty's Ministers. But although the sailing of the French fleet were admitted to be an event which could not be prevented, yet the disasters in the West Indies were imputable to Ministers in another point of view. In August, 1794, the news arrived of the disaster which befel Guadeloupe, accompanied with an urgent requisition for 6000 men. How this disaster was occasioned, he did not condescend to inquire. But if he would permit an inquiry to be instituted, it would be found that it was owing to a want of troops, and to a want of necessaries for the troops which were there. Not only did not the reinforcements arrive, but the troops were destitute of clothing, and were overwhelmed with the fatigues they had encountered.

The state of England again was urged as a reason why reinforcements were not sent, and one fault was defended by the avowal of another. There were only 17,000 troops in the kingdom, and of these 3,000 were destined for the marine service; but, he would ask, how came the marine service to have been previously neglected? This was merely shifting the vulnerable part. Out of these, however, 9,000 were ordered for the West Indies. What hindered their sailing? It blew a contrary wind, and the French fleet, it was said, jumped out of Brest as soon as our Grand Fleet put into port to refit. But why were they not sent out in detachments, as had been advised by Sir

Charles Grey? Or was it to be sustained as an excuse for the delay, that we had not a Fleet which could meet the French Fleet at sea. As well might it be said, that if the French should be so mean to take such an advantage against a gallant enemy, as to land an army on the coast of Ireland when our Fleet was in port, that no blame would be imputable to the Executive Government. As to the accommodation on board the transports, he would give the right hon. gentleman credit for his humanity, and his concern for the health of the troops; and if there was any neglect in this department, he did not believe that it was personally imputable to him; but he insisted, that the effect was as he had represented, and that every day immense numbers were thrown overboard, who died of sickness and disease, occasioned by neglect, and the want of proper arrangements for preserving the health of the men while on board the transports.—And if this was the case, surely blame was imputable to some person.—On whom this blame attached would be found on inquiry. In spring, 1795, the Islands were in imminent danger; requisitions were made for reinforcements, and it was resolved to make greater exertions, but the means could not be found. There was only 31,000 regular troops in England. The French had taken Holland, and in such a situation it would not have been safe for the Country to have sent a large force on foreign service. Here he could not but remark a strange contradiction in their argument. Some time ago, when the Militia and Fencible corps were greatly increased, it was represented, this force would be sufficient for the internal defence of the Country, and that it would enable us to apply our regular army to foreign service. Both propositions, however, could not be true. Either part of these 31,000 troops might have been spared for the West Indies, or the Militia and Fencible Regiments were insufficient for the purpose for which they were raised. Even in this emergency, an expedition was sent to the Cape of Good Hope, the blame of which the right hon. gentleman, with a sort of monopolizing magnanimity, was pleased to challenge to himself. We have got, said he, the key to the East Indies, and please God, we shall keep it. This was certainly comfortable news to the Stadtholder; but, said the right honourable gentleman, the Stadtholder was not strong enough to hold it, but please God we shall take care of it for him. This, in his opinion, amounted to a declaration, that Ministers never wish to see what was called the regular government of Holland re-established, and that they are quite pleased with the system of Republican Anarchy, which at present prevails in that country. A scheme was at last formed of

sending 27,000 men out to the West Indies. But the difficulty was, how they were to be got. Here the right hon. gentleman had adopted the most disgraceful mode of defence that had ever been attempted before a British House of Commons. He said there was a mighty army upon paper; but when it came to be reviewed, it was found to be good for nothing. When members came forward to Parliament, with an account of the army expences, they represented it as a more splendid establishment than even Louis the Fourteenth could ever boast. But when a requisition was made to furnish men for actual service, it was found to be composed of trash unfit to be trusted on any expedition. Raised, as they had been, upon a system of corrupt jobbing, they consisted of children and enfeebled old men, with a parcel of boys at their head. The remedial operation, which was adopted, was to bring forward the Duke of York, as the retriever of the British army, and the restorer of its discipline. The honourable gentleman was also profusely, and very justly, liberal of his encomiums upon his Royal Highness; nor was he very abstemious in his claims of merit for himself. Before his plan could be put in execution, an immense number of tremendous difficulties were to be conquered. The regiments were to be reduced, and marched from one end of the kingdom to the other, in order to be drafted, and a rendezvous was to be held at Southampton, for a general review previous to their embarkation. The ordnance service could not be provided, on account of the limited scale of operations admitted by the foundry at Woolwich. Transports could not be provided, on account of our increased and increasing trade, and double winds (a curious phrase) were requisite to convey the ordnance stores from Woolwich to Spithead. In fine, the expedition had always difficulties to encounter, and, unfortunately, the difficulties always got the better of it, and incredible disgraces had always been the fruit of incredible exertions. What, he asked, would have been said in the days of the late Earl of Chatham, if he had adduced such apologies for the failure of an expedition? And he reminded the right honourable gentleman, that incapacity, as well as neglect, was criminal in those who obtruded themselves into high situations for which they were not fit. Not a week before the 10th of November, Admiral Jervis sailed with a wind which would have carried the whole expedition to the West Indies. But it seems it could not be got ready till the 27th of November, the consequence of which was, all those accumulated disasters, which ruined the fleet, and defeated the enterprize. If Ministers were permitted to proceed upon such principles of blundering incapacity, they might give up

the contest with France altogether. The expeditions of the French are conducted in a very different manner. None of their plans were frustrated by the want of ordnance, of transports, or of double winds. Every measure was executed with vigour, promptitude, and decision. Rather than have been disappointed in a great design, by the tedious process of ordnance preparations, or the delays of feeble minds, the late Earl of Chatham would have wheeled the ordnance from Woolwich to the most distant point of the island. But the weakness of Ministers was uniformly mischievous and contemptible. If the papers he required were granted, he pledged himself to move an inquiry into the conduct of the war in the West Indies, and, if successful in that object, to follow it up at least with a resolution of the strongest censure.

Mr. FOX said, he did not mean to go into the general argument, but he must observe upon what had been said by the right honourable gentleman to-night, as to the opinion of Sir Charles Grey.—He could have wished, when the right honourable gentleman was speaking of that gallant officer, he had referred to the various grounds on which Sir Charles had formed his opinion.

He said, that what had fallen from himself on this subject on a former night, had been either mistaken, or mistated in the speech of the right honourable gentleman, who had seemed to say that he spoke from his knowledge of some particular letter, whereas he could assure the House that he had never seen any letter whatever; nor did he at all speak from any communication he had ever had with Sir C. Grey, that being a matter which he had always studiously avoided. He said then, however, it was unfair (and he thought so still), to give Sir Charles Grey's opinion on the subject without the papers and documents that led to that opinion, and which alone could enable the House to form a judgement of the state of the case. This he complained of in the present instance, and until he should see all the papers he should continue to complain of this conduct on the part of Ministers; for notwithstanding the compliment which the right honourable gentleman had paid Sir Charles Grey, who he admitted deserved all the handsome things that had been said of him, yet it was unfair to quote his opinion without bringing forward the materials on which he formed that opinion. Indeed, if the expression was not an exceptionable one, he would say that Ministers ought not to shelter themselves, as they attempted to do, under the opinion of Sir Charles Grey. It could never be fair to take that advantage, without bringing forward the materials on which the opinion of Sir Charles Grey was founded. For great as he was ready to allow the authority of Sir Charles

Grey to be, yet he must say, that no man's own authority could be so great as to supersede the necessity to examine the grounds of his opinion. If it was true, as it certainly was, upon general reasoning, how much greater was the necessity in this particular instance, after what the House had heard this day? How much more necessary was it to inquire into the ground of the opinion of Sir Charles Grey, upon the subject of the West-India expedition, after what had been said by his honourable friend (Mr. Grey). It appeared by the communication of his honourable friend to-day, that with respect to the circumstances of the force which went out from France, of which Sir Charles Grey had no knowledge, nor could have any when he wrote the letter alluded to by the right honourable gentleman, but of which the Executive Government of this country might at least have some knowledge, and therefore the materials for forming an opinion on the state of the West-India islands, were different with Sir Charles Grey and His Majesty's Ministers, at the time this letter was written by Sir Charles Grey; and that constituted the difference to be made between the opinion which Sir Charles Grey had expressed, and the opinion which His Majesty's Ministers ought to have formed. Having said this, he had said all with which he had to trouble the House upon this part of the subject. He had only to add, that he conceived the more they considered this business, the more they would see the necessity of entering into an inquiry upon it; and that the House should not be carried away by the imputed opinion of Sir Charles Grey. Before they should suffer themselves to decide on the subject, they should have before them the ground upon which that able and gallant officer formed that opinion.

Mr. Sheridan's motion,

That an account be laid before the House of the number of men destined for the expedition to the West-Indies, under Sir Charles Grey, at the close of the year 1793,  
was put and carried.

He then moved,

That an account be laid before the House of the number of men withdrawn from that service, in order to form an expedition to the coast of France, under Lord Moira;  
which, after an amendment confining it to certain dates and specifications, was agreed to.

The next motion—

An account of the number of men, who after the conquest of Martinique, St. Lucie, and Guadaloupe, were detached to St. Domingo, by Sir Charles Grey, in obedience to orders from home,  
was put and carried.

The fourth motion—

That the different applications made by the several commanders in chief

for reinforcements, since the appointment of Sir R. Abercrombie, be laid before this House, or such other parts of the same as can with safety be communicated, was withdrawn, on the undertaking of Mr. Secretary Dundas to give all the information in his power upon that head.

The fifth—

That returns be laid before the House of the several reinforcements which actually arrived in the West-Indies during that period, specifying the distribution of the force, and the dates when they arrived, being amended, by confining it to dates, &c. was agreed to.

Mr. SHERIDAN then moved for an account of the appointment of Sir John Borlase Warren to the expedition to Quiberon, and also that of General Doyle, together with an account of the regiments serving under him. Mr. Sheridan observed that the right honourable gentleman, in the course of his speech to-night, never made an allusion to the expedition to Quiberon; he was very wise to avoid it. He (Mr. Sheridan) also omitted that expedition in his speech, which in him was a foolish omission. This expedition certainly to a great degree impeded the West-India expedition, and some account of it was therefore proper to be laid before the House, when the West-India expedition was to be discussed.

The question being put,

Mr. Chancellor PITT objected to this motion, because the appointment of Sir John Borlase Warren to this expedition had no connexion with the West Indies. He objected to it also, because the appointment of General Doyle had no connexion with the West-Indies. The West-India expedition was large enough to demand a discussion itself, and there was no occasion to mix any thing else with the consideration of it. He had on a former occasion given notice that he should oppose any inquiry into the expedition to Quiberon. He should assign his reasons for that opposition, when the subject of that expedition came to be discussed. At all events it should be discussed separately, and that was sufficient reason against going into it to-night.

General TARLETON said, there was an intimate connexion between the question of the expedition to Quiberon and the expedition to the West Indies, for that in reality four of the best of the regiments that ought to have been sent to the West-Indies were sent to Quiberon.

After some observations by Mr. Sheridan, the motion was put and negatived.

Mr. SHERIDAN then moved—

That there be laid before the House, extracts of all Letters from Admiral Christian and General Abercrombie, from the date of their appointment, respecting the delay of the sailing of the expedition.



Mr. Secretary DUNDAS stated that a compliance with this motion was impossible, on account of the nature of the correspondence.

Mr. FOX said that he hoped that if the right honourable gentleman would not comply with the words of this motion, he would have the goodness to point out some other mode by which some information might be laid before the House as to this particular.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that if the right honourable gentleman who had just spoken, had attended to the whole of the speech of his right honourable friend (Mr. Dundas) he would have found he had alledged reasons against this motion. He had stated in general reasoning, the ground for maintaining that there was no culpable delay on the part of the Executive Government. He had stated the particular causes of the delay which had taken place, to prove that it was unavoidable—of the strength of that reasoning the House would judge. His right honourable friend had said, he would bring evidence in support of what he had said upon that subject. When he came forward with his documents, the House would consider of the whole matter, and determine upon its merits.

Mr. FOX said, he learnt from the speech of the right honourable gentleman himself (Mr. Dundas) that there was ground of blame in this part of the case at one period, even in his own opinion. But that right honourable gentleman had said that he had been since convinced and satisfied upon that subject—whence he would have it, that because he was satisfied the House ought to be satisfied also. This was arriving at a conclusion a little too rapidly. It was presuming a little on all the confidence which that House had from time to time been pleased to place in His Majesty's Ministers. Of what use was the inquisitorial power of the House of Commons, if the satisfaction of the King's Minister was to supersede all necessity for the House to institute an inquiry into any subject, whatever suspicious appearances it might bear?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said again that the right honourable gentleman did not attend to the speech of his right honourable friend. He had not said that the House ought to be convinced. He had only alledged that he was convinced himself, and that he would lay before the House the reason why he was so convinced, in order that the House might judge of the business in the same manner he had done.

Mr. GREY observed that the speech of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) proved that he himself felt some indignation, and had expressed some warmth at part of the delay which this motion was aimed to explain, but forsooth, he had since been

satisfied. The right honourable gentleman had made the *amende honorable* to the Board of Ordnance and the Transport Board, by saying that although he thought they had been guilty of some delay, upon better inquiry, he found they had made the utmost possible exertion. Now this sort of general reasoning, when coupled with the events which had happened, proved one of two things: either that we are disabled as a nation, and cannot take proper measures to defend ourselves against our enemies, or that we have inefficient councils. The latter, he hoped, was the case. He hoped there was no other reason for our disasters than the incapacity of Ministers; who endeavoured to shift off blame from time to time as it was imputed and imputable to them. The right honourable gentleman talked of his being satisfied. The House ought not to inquire whether he was satisfied, but to satisfy themselves.

General SMITH asked how it was possible for the House to form a judgement upon this subject, without the information which the motion before them tended to bring forward? He believed there was not one intelligent man in this nation who did not think there was a very shameful delay in this expedition.

The motion was then put and negatived.

Mr. SHERIDAN then moved,

That there be laid before the House a return of the number of ships foundered or missing, and the number of men lost or missing, belonging to the expedition under General Abercrombie.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that the ships missing were four in number, but it was impossible to know how many, or whether any of them were foundered, or whether they were captured. If the honourable gentleman wished to have the names of the ships which did not arrive at Barbadoes, a list of these might be made out, but other information could not be given to him.

The question was then put and negatived.

Mr. SHERIDAN wished to know whether the right honourable gentleman meant to state, that the expedition to Quiberon composed part of the expedition to the West Indies; whether the force should be sent to the West Indies in the aggregate, as Ministers contended, or as he contended, should have been sent in detachments? Was Lord Moira to go to the West Indies? He should, in order to explain this, move,

That there be laid before the House a return of the General and Staff Officers belonging to the regiments in England, serving under Lord Moira, in the years 1794 and 1795.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS promised to give the substance of this information in another form. The motion was withdrawn.

Mr. SHERIDAN then moved,

That there be laid before the House a copy of the instructions given to Sir John Barlasce Warren, relative to the expedition to Quiberon in June and July, 1795.

Mr. Chancellor PITT opposed it on the general ground which he had stated already, that the expedition to Quiberon had no connection with that to the West Indies, and that they should be considered in separate discussions.

Mr. SHERIDAN maintained that they were connected, for that the troops which were sent to Quiberon and Isle Dieu, ought to have been sent to the West Indies, and the blame rested with Ministers that these troops were not sent to the West Indies.

Mr. Sheridan then moved,

That there be laid before the House an account of the number of men who died on board transports at Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, or in ports of Great Britain or Ireland, destined for the West Indies, in the years 1794 and 1795.

Mr. Chancellor PITT opposed this motion. The account could not be given accurately; besides, if it could, it would only afford a melancholy picture, the examination of which could produce no good.

General SMITH thought this answer a very extraordinary one, and supported the motion.

Mr. FOX enforced the propriety of Ministers assigning better reasons for refusing information to the House than they had done in the discussion of this business.

The motion was put and negatived.

Mr. SHERIDAN next moved for

Copies or extracts of letters or memorials on this subject from the officers commanding the troops on board the said transports, from the Mayor of Plymouth, or from Lord George Lenox, Governor of Plymouth garrison.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH thought this a very important matter, indeed. It was the privilege and the duty of that House to inquire into the expenditure of public money.—This they all allowed. But he wished to see them inquire into the expenditure (if he could be allowed the expression) of human life. He wished the House of Commons to make some inquiry into the loss of the lives of our fellow-creatures.—If this sort of information was to be refused to that House, and the public at large were to be kept in the dark, he must confess that would appear to him a very extraordinary proceeding. The House of Commons were to inquire into accounts of sums of money as a matter not of right only, but of duty also; but into the loss of the lives of our fellow-creatures no inquiry was to be allowed. So that the principle amounted to this; the lives of our fellow-beings were of less value, in the opinion of that House,

than our property. He owned he had other notions; he thought that the Legislature of a country ought to, inquire a little into the expenditure of human life.

The motion was then put and negatived.

The remainder of Mr. Sheridan's motions were all agreed to, excepting that for laying before the House the correspondence of the Ordnance and Transport Board, which, after a conversation, in which Mr. Grey, Mr. Sheridan, the Secretary at War, Mr. Fox, General Smith, and Mr. M. Robinson took a part, was negatived.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS then moved for a long list of letters, of different dates, 1794, and 1795, from Sir Charles Grey, Sir John Jarvis, General Williamson, and other naval and military commanders in the West Indies.

Ordered.

*Friday, 29th April.*

The House resolved into a Committee on the act for the discovery of the longitude, (30 Geo. III. Chap. 14.) Sir PHILIP STEVENS in the Chair. The usual resolution was about to be agreed to, when

Mr. HUSSEY observed, that the business was carried on in whispers, and he should be glad to know what was going forward.

Mr. ROSE replied, that they were only reading the annual resolution which gives 5000l. towards the discovery of the longitude.

Mr. HUSSEY wished to know, if the right honourable gentleman could give any assurance to the House, that the attainment of the object would be rendered nearer by this reward.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, if the honourable gentleman asked the question gravely, and not with an air of pleasantry, he would answer, that the improvement made in science, since the Board was established, more than counterbalanced the money expended. Our commerce and the art of navigation were indebted to the scientific discoveries which had been made, which was a matter of the most serious advantage to us as a nation, and by no means a subject of levity and pleasantry.

Mr. HUSSEY replied, that in the discussions in that House he never was accustomed to deal with pleasantry; he was serious in the question which he put to the right honourable gentleman. The House granted annually 5000l. for the discovery of the longitude, and he now gravely inquired whether we were nearer the object, or what were the advantages derived.

Captain BERKELY said, that though the longitude had not been completely discovered, the art of navigation had been greatly

benefited by the rewards that were held out. He instanced Harrison's time-piece, for which a reward of 10,000 pounds had been given.

Mr. FRANCIS observed, that if the discovery of the longitude was rendered nearer by the reward, there was, however, no evidence of that approximation before the House. He had been informed by persons, who had the best means of information on the subject, that Mr. Harrison's time-piece did not answer so well as had been expected.

After a short conversation, the resolution passed the Committee. The House was resumed, and the report ordered to be received on Monday.

Mr. CURWEN moved that the bill for abolishing the existing game laws should be read a second time. Mr. Curwen said, that when he had first moved for leave to bring in a bill of this nature it was his intention only to have it printed, and left on the table to be considered by the country, that it might be directed in the future prosecution of it by the opinion it should produce. But from what fell from the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) upon the first reading of the bill, he had felt himself called upon in honour to submit it to an early discussion. The bill being drawn in the view that he had mentioned, was not in that correct state which he could have wished, had he been able to consider it more maturely. There might be many things in it inaccurate, but the general principle on which it was founded, he held to be perfectly good: this was, to allow the landholder to kill game on his own grounds, and to allow game to be sent openly to market. He had at first intended to leave the protection of game entirely to the operation of the licence that was required. When game was started on a man's own grounds, he proposed that no penalty should be annexed to his pursuing it farther. Adhering to the general principles on which he had at first given notice of the bill, he would move it to be now read a second time, and if any argument was stated in opposition to it, he would afterwards take the liberty of replying.

Captain BERKELEY said, that when a bill was proposed to abolish the whole system of the existing game laws, he expected at least that it would have contained some grounds on which the propriety of such a measure could be discussed. When he heard on a former occasion the honourable gentleman speak of the oppressive nature of the game laws, he suspected that the bill would have introduced some great innovation, though he now found that the essence of it seemed to be comprehended in the clause that allowed landholders to kill game on their own grounds; but this was fol-

lowed by a clause which destroyed the whole effect of such a regulation, namely, that which allowed the person who had started game on his own grounds to pursue it where he thought proper. This would occasion the utmost confusion, as a man might always say that the game he followed was started on his ground. Thus taking away the privileges of landed property, and reducing all distinctions which had hitherto attached to landed proprietors. Every clause contained matter that was exceptionable, and some of them what appeared to him to be nonsense. There was a clause reserving the rights of Lords of the Manor, &c. But while the bill extended the privilege of killing game to every landholder, and allowed him to pursue game where he thought proper after he had started it, he did not think that the Lord of the Manor would find any account in having a game-keeper for the protection of his game, or that he would at all be able to preserve it. There was a clause that allowed any person to stop those whom they found carrying a gun for the destruction of game between sun-set and sunrise, and to take the gun from him. This was followed by a clause that provided, if any resistance was made, the person attempting to apprehend the person transgressing, should be entitled to repel force by force, should he meet with resistance, and even to maim, kill, &c. There was a clause following this which indicated that it was framed rather to the West of the Isle of Man. It was that the person who thought himself aggrieved by being thus hurt, maimed, or killed, should be allowed to seek redress at the Quarter Sessions, which would no doubt create no small astonishment, should a person of the last description appear and seek redress. In short, he appealed to the House, whether the bill was such as could be sent to a Committee? and he would therefore move, that it be read a second time this day three months.

Sir RICHARD SUTTON thought that much contention among individuals, and great destruction to the game, would arise from a permission to every landholder to kill game on his own grounds, and to pursue it after it was started. The little proprietor would lay snares round every hedge, and as property was often intersected, it would be impossible for a man to pursue game without danger of exposing himself to a law-suit, to ascertain to whom the game he followed belonged: He stated, that in Germany, there were three classes of game, subject to particular regulations. He never heard of arrangements like those proposed existing in any other country. In these times of democratical doctrines he did not hesitate to utter the aristocratical opinion that the game laws of this country were founded on good principles, and secured to the landed

proprietors that superiority of privilege and of enjoyment which they could best exercise without injuring themselves, or interfering with any other pursuits. They likewise afforded to a country gentleman an inducement to live in the country, which he considered as no mean object. He wished, however, that game should be brought openly to market, and exposed to sale. It was well known that rich merchants and citizens, who had no game of their own, were extremely desirous of this luxury, and fell upon means of obtaining it. He was of opinion, that those who were properly qualified should be at liberty to sell what they killed, and in this way the market would be supplied. With regard to the poacher, he should shew him no mercy. He would increase the penalties to which the offence was liable, and put a stop to a violation of the law that was attended with such pernicious consequences.

Mr. BUXTON said, that the bill might contain some things liable to exception; but to its general tendency he was favourable. He thought, that every man should equally be entitled to enjoy what was upon that property; and, though no friend to equality in general, here he thought it was proper. As to the laws of Germany, God forbid that they should ever be introduced in this country. If all landholders had a right to kill game, the market would be better supplied. With regard to the latter part of the bill, he approved it heartily; nor did he think it was liable to the ridicule thrown upon it. If people came at night to kill game, some means should be taken to prevent them from disturbing their neighbours by pursuing game at improper hours. There were many exceptionable parts in the present bill, but he avowed himself a friend to its general principle.

Mr. FOX conceived the country obliged to his honourable friend for introducing the present bill to Parliament. There were some clauses certainly; which required to be amended, but to the principle of the bill he professed himself a cordial friend. He wished to abstain from general arguments, but he hoped the House would consider, that what the honourable Baronet had advanced with respect to the German laws, was totally unapplicable to the question. What, he asked, was there in the British code to resemble in the least the laws of Germany? He was surprized to hear any thing like the introduction of them into this kingdom. The arguments, however, of the honourable Baronet, as far as they were right, most assuredly went to the fundamental repeal of the game laws. He says, that in Germany, and he recommends the same regulation in this country, game could be brought and sold at the public market by those who were qualified. He was firmly



persuaded, that to give the landholder his just right over the game on the grounds which he occupied, would be the best means of preserving the game. He maintained, that the landholder had an indisputable right to the game on his ground, and much more so assuredly, than the man who obtains a fictitious right to kill game, by taking out his qualification. The honourable Baronet observed, that he has no mercy on poachers; this was harsh language; theirs was certainly an evil life, and led to the commission of crimes of greater magnitude, and infinitely more dangerous to the repose of society. But when the honourable Baronet denies poachers mercy, what does he say to those by whom they are employed; were they not, in a moral point of view, equally, if not more culpable in inciting them to the violation of the laws of their country? He never could look upon the breach of the laws with more horror, as far as related to the poor, than he did with respect to the rich, who in many instances conceived that they were free from guilt, as long as they escaped with impunity. When gentlemen called for vengeance against these unfortunate men, he could not look upon those gentlemen with complacence who trafficked for Boroughs, and purchased seats in the House of Commons. He could not persecute the poachers with indignant rage, without manifesting his detestation at the conduct of many of their superiors. To prevent the evil, the remedy, he maintained, was in the principle of the bill, for he insisted that conformably to the doctrine of the most eminent writers on the criminal jurisprudence of this country, the game laws were not only ineffectual, but disgraceful to the nation. It was shocking that a penal law should exist, which was daily broken without the possibility of being enforced—and what was the consequence? The consequence was obvious, it increased the number of persons acting against law, who were, from their bad habits, the more liable to fall into other offences. Take away, therefore, the corner stone of these crimes, the temptation to the private sale of game; for in proportion as the laws are infringed with impunity, so do crimes invariably increase. This law, so often broken, adds considerably to the melancholy catalogue of criminals. If he were asked, would he repeal the game laws without any substitution; he would answer certainly, rather than they should exist, without any amendment. But the substitute was provided by the bill, by making game private property. A reciprocal desire to oblige prevailed throughout this country between the tenant and landlord: and if the present bill, properly amended, was passed, gentlemen would not find themselves more restrained than they are at present in their amusement. He again pressed the House to consider, if the pre-

preservation of game was its object, to give the landholder an interest in its protection, and he called on the right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Windham) if in the great sporting country where he occasionally resided, it was usual for farmers to warn gentlemen off their grounds? the reverse, he believed, was the fact, thus was the game, he insisted, diminished in consequence of the acts passed by our ancestors for its protection, as the farmers were indifferent as to the persons by whom it was destroyed. The vote he would give this night, certainly would be for the second reading of the bill, which might be amended in the Committee, and lie over to another session, until it was maturely considered by the members of the House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was not disposed to detain the House at any length on the present subject. A considerable difference of opinion seemed to prevail both with respect to the principle of the bill, and the means by which its provisions should be enforced. The preservation of game seemed generally to be admitted on a real and solid ground of policy; and, for his own part, he considered it in a more serious point of view, and as productive of more beneficial effects than it appeared to be considered by some gentlemen, especially from its tendency to induce gentlemen to live in the country, where the hunting and killing of game afforded an innocent amusement. It might therefore be laid down as a principle, that the preservation of game should be maintained, not by means oppressive and arbitrary, but by some regulation coercive and efficient. In viewing the degrees of right to kill game, as enjoyed by different orders of men in society, it was not from partiality, but from reason and reflection, that he would indulge that privilege in a superior degree to the higher orders of the state. From their situation and habits in life, it was an amusement better suited than to others, and their gratification claimed, he thought, the first attention. The second class, to whom a participation of this right might properly be given, were the occupiers of land, but in a more limited degree, and only on their own grounds; lest, by too liberal an indulgence in this amusement, they might be diverted from more serious and useful occupations. Nor ought they to enjoy this privilege any otherwise than as an amusement, and by no means on the notion of property; for property is a mere creature of the law, and though the law gave the farmer a profit in the ground under a lease, yet it granted him the right only of deriving from it such advantages as the labours of agriculture might fairly produce. This was not the law of England only, but of almost all countries.—Nor was it on any general principle of property that the farmer

was to enjoy this right, but only in a certain limited degree for relaxation and amusement, and as some encouragement to preserve the game, in the use and enjoyment of which he should participate to a certain extent. There was another class of men, he meant those unqualified for the sport, concerning whom there would, he believed, be no difference of opinion. Yet, among other principles of the bill, there was one which went to enable such persons to avail themselves of this privilege; but was not this enabling them to poach and trespass on the lands of the proprietor, and giving them an opportunity of pursuing the sports of the field, not as an amusement, but as a livelihood? Such a law, in his opinion, would hold out an act of indemnity to poachers, who, for their own sake, and for the sake of society, should not be encouraged to engage in such diversions. If game was to be made saleable, the poacher would be better able to supply the market, than any persons whom the law, or the proprietors of game, might permit or employ to kill it. The selling and carriage of game, though prohibited, are nevertheless daily practised; but if you make it free to be brought to market, the more there is sold, the more will there be destroyed. The poacher can procure it cheaper, and with much more ease, in consequence of having made it a study and a trade; he would, therefore, undersell the occupier of the land, or any other privileged person. The farmer also, if let into a share of the amusement of killing game, and converting it to his own use, would, without very forcible restrictions, be tempted to consume his time, by attempting to make a lucrative employment of that which was granted only as a limited amusement. Upon the whole, therefore, he would advise the business to be put off, for the purpose of more mature examination, or with a view that some other system might be proposed, that would more effectually accomplish the object of the present bill.

Mr. FRANCIS was perfectly of opinion, that every possible encouragement should be given for the preservation of game.— But he was also of opinion, that the moment the law gave the property of land to the tenant, the same moment it gave him a property in the game fed on that land. As well take away all his corn, and the produce of his industry, which is fairly his property, as to allow birds and other creatures to come and devour it, without his having the permission to destroy them. Neither could he agree with the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) in thinking that the greater the quantity of game killed, the less would be the quantity of game on the whole. The contrary, in his opinion, would be the case; for if the farmer enjoyed the privilege of shoot-

ing and consuming game, he would feel an anxiety to take care of the eggs, and to promote the propagation of game, which, in the present system, from his indignation at the treatment he receives, he is rather tempted to extinguish. Mr. Francis readily agreed that game might be made lawfully saleable; nor did he see any difference between the man who kills it, and the citizen that is supplied with it, only that the country gentleman was more eager to kill it, and the alderman more disposed to eat it.

Mr. SHERIDAN agreed with his honourable friend. He was always an enemy to the existing game laws, because he was an enemy to injustice and oppression. He thought it an odd idea of the right of property, to say property was the creature of the law; but if it was so, the law ought to follow up its own principle, and protect it. Was it criminal for a man to destroy the animals which destroyed his property? Yet that was the principle of the existing law. Persons have been transported for invading that property, which it was lawful for animals to destroy, that they might afford sport to a few qualified people; and in this manner has property for a long time been the sport of law. If every man was permitted to share in the amusement on his own estate, he would be desirous to preserve the game upon it for the sake of that amusement, and not be anxious to annihilate it, as he does now, from a just indignation. And he was apprehensive, that if game were saleable also, instead of having the country paled round with gibbets, as it now is, it would contribute greatly to reduce the penal code; for, by the Act of Geo. I. many persons had suffered imprisonment for life, for partaking of that pleasure which the law decreed exclusively to others; but which no principle of right, humanity, or justice could defend. Though he saw no chance that the bill would ultimately be successful, yet he wished exceedingly that it might be committed, and the objectionable parts more particularly pointed at. At all events, he hoped that the Act of George I. might be repealed, for nothing could more disgrace our laws.

Mr. HARRISON conceived the regulations of the Act of George I. alone to be a sufficient reason for passing this bill, since, although the penalty was only five pounds, a person was detained in prison all his life for the expences, which commonly amounted to fifty or sixty pounds more. Another reason why he disapproved of the present game laws, was, the summary mode of proceeding which they countenanced; for if a body of people came armed upon a man's property, and the servants opposed their invasion, and they killed any of those servants, they were justified for having done it; but if, on the other hand, any one of the servants killed

one of them, he was found guilty of murder. He knew the cases had occurred in courts of justice, and he therefore thought bill would be of service, if it were committed, and allowed over to another year.

Mr. JENKINSON defended the existing game laws for preservation of game, as affording a favourite amusement, a strong inducement for gentlemen to live in the country, which greater benefits were derived to the nation at large, seemed to be generally imagined. Many of the evils that existed in a neighbouring nation, and which not a little contributed to accelerate the revolution, were in a great degree occasioned by gentlemen not residing on their estates, and, in consequence of their abrogating all influence over those who cultivated their lands. As usual, the amusement of shooting, &c. entices gentlemen to remove from the country many of the summer and winter months, and particularly the latter, when their presence is more acceptable and advantageous to the poor. Besides, the making of game property, does not tend to increase that property, but to destroy the amusement. As things now stand, the farmer has a right to order off any gentleman, who comes to hunt on his farm—a right, however, which he is not disposed to avail himself, when he sees no disadvantage will ensue to him; but if the farmer is to share in the game, he regards it as his property, then, indeed, will he order him off, if he is otherwise that his property and profit will be injured; in most parts of the country, if gentlemen be confined to their estates, they will thank you but little for the amusement. The honourable gentleman opposite had said, that property once given, the consequences of possession ought to follow; but he seemed to think that property was given conditionally. There was no injustice at all in the restriction, for one right is built upon as solid a foundation as the other. If the farmer does not enjoy the privilege of putting the game on his estate, he pays less for the rent of that estate, consequently the balance is equal. If he enjoyed that privilege, he must pay more for his tenure, as the property would be more valuable. He has the land for other uses, and for other sources of profit, not indiscriminately for all. And this stands good in analogies to the game laws; for instance, in the discovery of a mine, which undoubtedly does not become the property of the discoverer. Mr. Jenkinson had no objection to some mitigation of the game laws. He did not pretend to deliver any decided opinion upon the bill, but threw it out as a subject for consideration, whether landholders ought not to enjoy the right of sporting on their own land, but at the same time be debarred from selling the

they followed ; they might then share in the amusement without any temptation to convert their right into an abuse.

Sir R. SALISBURY coincided in opinion with the last gentleman who spoke, and was particularly desirous to see every man enjoy the right of sporting on his own grounds.

Sir J. ROUS was against the bill, as unpopular. He had conversed with many farmers on the subject, and they all concurred in disapprobation of the regulations now proposed, as opening a source for continual contentions and disputes, while the whole principle would go to the destruction of the game.

Mr. COX was very pointedly hostile to the bill, as attempting to introduce a change in our whole system of laws and government, which our ancestors had so wisely established and sealed with their blood ; of that system, the game laws were a part, and if some of them were objectionable, they might be amended. He could not therefore see upon what grounds certain gentlemen endeavoured to substitute new doctrines in the place of our constitution. [Mr. Cox was here called to order by Mr. Francis, but continued to treat that gentleman's opinion as absurd]. For the law gives all property, and as it does not give the landholder any right to kill game, it cannot therefore be his property. Mr. Cox continued to deprecate all innovations, and to exhort the House, that if they loved the constitution, to be vigilant to preserve it.

Mr. FRANCIS, in explanation, thanked the honourable gentleman for the epithets of kindness he bestowed on his arguments and intentions, but contended, that what he advanced was in perfect consistency of reasoning ; for if every creature that comes to injure the property of the farmer cannot be destroyed by him, then it may be said that one has the property, and the other the produce, of the land.

Mr. CURWEN was happy to see that one gentleman only stood forward as the advocate of the game laws. He perfectly agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the propriety of preserving the game, and being rigorously severe against poachers.— But there was a law paramount to all these, namely, that no one should be injured in his property. But as the laws now stand, the hardships endured by farmers could scarcely be conceived, much less adequately described. He considered it as an absurdity in those laws, that there should be a right of action against a man for killing game on his own land, though he admitted it might not wholly be expedient for every person to be at liberty to exercise that right in a country where manufactures and commerce were so much encouraged as in this, because it would induce people to throw

away their time. The proper qualification, he conceived to be a licence, and that was the custom in Russia, where licences were granted by the State for a trifling consideration. If the bill were committed, the House might alter and modify it in the Committee, he thought, so as to render it unexceptionable. As the laws stood, there were not more than 12,000 certificates, so that not one fourth of the persons interested in the soil possessed the free use of their own property. With respect to poachers, the bill would render the crime different, and thereby reduce the number of offences. There were some things in it which from the suggestions he had received he would alter, if he had time to do so; but if it were thrown out, he should hereafter bring forward a motion for the repeal of the statutes of the 8th of George I. the 26th of George II. and the 2d of His present Majesty. He did not chuse to enter minutely into the clauses of his bill, but expressed himself happy that he had not to defend it on improper motives. If the bill was a bad one, he was sorry it was not better. He concluded by saying, he should, notwithstanding, take the opinion of the House upon it.

The House divided, for the amendment, that the bill be read a second time this day three months, 65—for reading it now 17,—majority against the bill, 48.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day, that the House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of a supply. The House having resolved itself into a Committee, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that in pursuance of what he had stated on a former occasion, respecting navy and victualling bills, &c. he proposed the funding five millions, but that there was to be deducted of that sum from five to six hundred thousand pounds, in consequence of the Bank of England holding that sum; the sum therefore which he proposed by the present vote for funding was 4,321,000*l*. He therefore moved a resolution for granting to His Majesty

4,331,141*l*. 15*s*. 6*d*. for funding navy bills.

He also moved, that there be granted to His Majesty:—

233,485*l*. 4*s*. 10*d*. for making good the like sum issued out of the proceeds of the Exchequer.

139,350*l*. for relieving the distressed clergy and laity of France.

1,333*l*. to Mr. Bridgeman for making returns of the average prices of sugars.

384*l*. 7*s*. for improving the approaches to both Houses of Parliament.

51*l*. 5*s*. for attending the Committee to point out the abuses in the franking of letters.

5000*l*. for the prosecution of Mr. Hastings.

2,741*l*. for the purchase of a new Parliament office.

200,000*l*. to the commissioners for paying off the national debt.



2,354,700*l.* deficiencies of grants for the year 1795.

3,000*l.* to the Board of Agriculture.

2,000*l.* for the British Museum.

The resolutions were agreed to, and the report was ordered to be received on Monday.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that when the House should resolve itself into that Committee on Monday, he should propose that they should vote a sum of money by way of subsidy to the King of Sardinia. He then moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider farther of ways and means for raising a supply. The House being in a Committee, the Minister said he had to propose a resolution for the lottery of this year. It was to consist of 60,000 tickets. The terms on which he had agreed, after a full and eager competition on the part of the bidders, were 1*l.* a ticket. The sum therefore to be voted was 780,000*l.* which would yield to the public a profit of 280,000*l.* He therefore moved, that it is the opinion of this Committee, that the sum of 780,000*l.* be raised by way of lottery, to consist of 60,000 tickets, at 1*l.* each. And that on the 3d of May next, the sum of 1*l.* 10*s.* be paid as a deposit, &c. into the Bank of England, &c.

Agreed to.

The House being resumed, the Report was ordered to be received on Monday. Agreed to go into a Committee of ways and means on Monday.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that on Monday he should submit to the House the terms on which he proposed the funding of the navy bills, &c.

*Monday, 2d May.*

Sir PHILIP STEPHENS brought up the Report of the Committee appointed to consider the expediency of granting a sum, not exceeding 5000*l.* for the encouragement of persons making discoveries on the subject of the longitude, who had resolved in the affirmative.

The resolution was agreed to, and a bill ordered.

Mr. CURWEN said, that as it seemed to be the disposition of almost every member of the House, that the oppressive parts of the game laws should be done away, he rose to propose the repeal, not of the laws in general, but of those which appeared to him to be the most obnoxious; he meant the 26th of George II. and the 2d of George III. which sanctioned the grievance of prosecuting persons accused of killing game, and recovering penalties in the Courts

of Record, instead of confining the business to the proper jurisdiction of the several county magistrates. He therefore moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the acts of the 26th of George II. and 2d of George III. relating to game.

Sir RICHARD SUTTON declared he was far from wishing to prosecute any taylor or shoemaker who might occasionally, for his amusement, take a gun in his hand for the purpose of killing game; and much less to be severe upon a farmer, against whom a rigorous strictness ought not to be exercised; but he well knew that the repeal of the acts alluded to would create much inconvenience, and go to the encouragement of the depredating practices of many persons, whose insolence was already too overbearing to be tolerated.

Mr. JOLLIFFE observed, that the present laws had existed for a great number of years, and no well-founded complaints had ever been urged against them. At all events, he thought the subject ought to be postponed to next session.

Mr. BUXTON said, there was no greater enemy to the game laws than himself: but he did not wish that the subject should be brought forward at present.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL objected to the motion. After a good deal of conversation on the subject, he was of opinion, that the game laws, as they stood now, were better for this country at large than, perhaps, any thing that could be adopted instead of them. He formed something like the same opinion of the forest laws, although he knew that both had been reprobated. He particularly objected to the repeal of the acts, as the proposed bill would confine the punishment of offences to country magistrates; and, as the jurisdiction of a magistrate did not extend beyond his own county, an offender would only have to remove his residence to another, to get beyond the reach of justice.

Mr. CURWEN said a few words in reply; after which the motion was put, and negatived without a division.

The order of the day for the House taking into consideration the proceedings of the court martial held on Colonel Cawthorne being read,

General SMITH moved, "That a copy of the said proceedings be now read,"—which was agreed to, and they were read *pro forma* by the Clerk.

The SPEAKER said, that this was the time for Colonel Cawthorne to state any thing he had to say in his defence.

Mr. CAWTHORNE rose, and addressed the Speaker in the following terms:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, under the distressful perturbation in which

I rise, in this most awful moment of my life, I am too sensible of the candor and humanity of the House, to think it necessary for me formally to implore for myself that indulgence which it will always, in its justice, shew to every one of its members, when called upon to justify or excuse himself.—Proud and happy, Sir, as I have hitherto been, in the enjoyment of a seat within these walls, no consideration whatsoever would have induced me to come hither to-day, had I not received the commands of the House to attend here in my place. I would not, Sir, have quitted the confinement I had imposed upon myself, as a proof of my profound submission to the judgement of a court martial composed of honourable men; although I was at the same time convinced that they had been so far frustrated in their research for truth, by the intricacy and confusion in which it was enveloped, as to prevent my being able to convince them, that, in the instances in which I may have deviated from the rigid line of military order, I erred, either from defect of judgement, which I do not stand up to justify, or from the fallibility of inexperience, of which I was not then aware.—But I most solemnly protest, I never acted with an intention to injure any man, or upon any fraudulent or corrupt motive whatsoever; and I venture to assert, that no legal proof has been, or, I trust, can be, brought before the House, of my having acted fraudulently or corruptly; and surely, Sir, though there can be no doubt that the court-martial have proceeded with the purest intention, and with the most undeniable desire of making an upright judgement, they may, in a case so complicated and so voluminous as that upon your table, have been deceived. Might not irregularity have been mistaken for fraud; and the receipt of money, not at any given time wholly expended, for misapplication, corruption, and embezzlement: In reality they were so; for in every instance to which the terms of fraud, misapplication, corruption, and embezzlement, are annexed to the opinions of the court-martial, without positive evidence to support them, were I even to admit that the facts of irregularity complained of, and of money not expended at certain given times, have been proved, I will venture to assert, that the inferences drawn therefrom of fraud, misapplication, corruption and embezzlement, are erroneous. I trust therefore that the House will not look upon me in the light of having so suddenly deviated from the character which, previous to my being thus charged, I trust, stood unimpeached. May I not be justified in alledging, that the prosecutor could not affix to any act of mine the appellation of any specific offence, because, after having searched through the mutiny act, in order to find the name of an offence which he

could give to any thing I had done or omitted, he was under a necessity of pressing into his charges, out of the articles of war, the words, "In a scandalous and infamous manner, unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman." Sir, being again become a private member of civil society, I am too sensible of the respectability of those noblemen and gentlemen who sat as my judges, and of the importance of courts-martial in general to the public safety, to harbour a thought or utter a word, that would have the remotest tendency towards shaking the general estimation in which I hope and trust they will ever be held by all ranks of people, as a highly honourable and indispensably necessary tribunal; but I hope nevertheless, that the whole influence of military law will be entirely confined to military offences, and limited to military tribunals. For, Sir, I cannot omit observing, that lately I was called upon before a court-martial, not only to answer for my conduct as a Colonel of a regiment, but to be responsible for acts done by me as a Deputy-Lieutenant, and so charged and made amenable to a military tribunal for offences of a civil nature, although I had entered a formal and solemn protest against such proceedings. To-day I am called upon before the House of Commons to attend in my place, to answer for acts done by me as a Colonel of a regiment, and thus charged and made amenable in this high civil tribunal for offences of a military nature. But, Sir, from a consciousness of never having acted from corrupt motives, and a confidence in the unprejudiced investigation of this honourable House, it is the anxious wish of my heart to be tried by you, conformably to the usual course of your proceedings in all cases of trial; having no doubt, that under the scrutiny of your awful inquiry, I should receive a determination that would heal my wounded character, and re-establish my moral and social reputation.—I am sure, Sir, the House of Commons will never consider itself as a supplementary court for the purpose of receiving and registering the sentence of courts-martial, for the government of their proceedings upon one of its own members, nor deem it consistent with its dignity and justice, to see with their eyes, and to hear with their ears, the competency of evidence received by virtue of military laws. Nor will this House, I humbly apprehend, consider the proceedings of a court-martial as a sufficiently legal proof for them to decide upon the guilt or innocence of one of its members. Presuming, therefore, that the House only calls upon me to efface the impression of those epithets which tend to fix a stigma on my moral character, and to shew that through the various charges, the language of the articles of war, which I have before mentioned, does

not necessarily attach on my conduct ; I beg leave to call the attention of the House to the main criminating point of the 1st and 2d charges ; which charges, whatever moral guilt is alledged to be included in them under the term fraud, Sir, I presume, from the evidence, that the fraud meant to have been proved, was supposed to have been effected, by concealing from different persons the terms in which a contract made with them was conceived ; and which contract was signed by them. To that point I confine my defence—but if the complexion of the case is either to establish or refute any intention in me to commit a fraud when I first drew for the whole of the marching guineas, it must surely weigh with the House, to find that I paid every guinea instantly to every man at that time in the regiment ; that I offered to return the remainder to the Receiver General, who refused to accept it ; that long before the exhibition of any articles against me, a general voucher passed for the expenditure of the whole of that sum, which, in fact, was expended, and for which the Captains gave vouchers, and which they have sworn they would not have given, unless convinced that the whole sum had been expended—and that this is not a case where it is even pretended that the supposed object of the fraud could possibly have tempted any man to commit it.—For it is but on the irregular application (and which the charges term misapplication) of a few of these guineas, that the whole charge is grounded, and not on any embezzlement of them.—Even this circumstance, I assure the House, arose from a misconception of the act, from which I conceived, the recruits, as well as the men of the regiment, who were embodied in the county, were respectively intitled to the marching guineas also, before they marched out of the county, and therefore agreed with them before they enlisted for the payment of it, along with their bounty. The moral turpitude of making such an agreement with any man before he was enlisted, who knew what he was doing, and consequently was free to accept or reject any terms offered to him, I profess I cannot discern. If the recruit even did not understand specifically the meaning of the word marching guineas, as described by the act, yet if he generally understood (and indeed the receipt expresses it) that it was some thing besides and in addition to his bounty, and that that sum was all he was to have for coming into the regiment, it was his own act ; and is it not with the utmost caution that men ought to be allowed to come into courts of justice to rescind their own agreements ; and that by criminating those with whom they were made, when they offer no other proof of imposition than their own testimony, itself inconsistent, and contradicted both by written and verbal testimony also ;

But I submit to the House, as I did in my defence, that no receipts or agreements have been fraudulently obtained from any man ; and even if they had been, it was neither with my privity or consent. Six men only out of the many recruits enlisted at the Board of Lieutenancy were called to prove that the agreements for their bounty, including their marching guineas, had been fraudulently obtained from them : four of these say they either agreed with me ; or my serjeant ; and two say they agreed with certain men called militia insurers, or their principals. The first four affirm, that they never agreed for their marching guinea ; and that the paper expressing that circumstance was never either read to them or by them, though the paper is a plain printed slip of paper (except in one instance, and then it was not produced), containing five lines in large letters, the words marching guinea distinguished by large roman capitals. In their examination in chief, they offered to give a clear and distinct relation of all that passed at the Board when enlisted : they at first positively denied any explanation or reading of the agreement ; but one, when pressed, admitted the serjeant did read the agreement, but he paid little attention to it ; and the three others, after offering to the court a supposed correct account of many facts that happened at the same time, then nearly two years before ; and assuming correctly and accurately to remember every word and fact which could have a tendency to criminate me, but chusing to forget every thing which passed that would have refuted the charge of imposition, when, unable to reconcile part of this testimony, said they were drunk, intoxicated, or in some manner befuddled. If sober when they signed this agreement, how could they be ignorant of the contents of five lines of a plain uninterpolated slip of paper ? and which they set their names, not their marks, to.—Could they write without their eyes being fixed upon the paper ; and if drunk, ought they to have been admitted to come forward in a court of justice, to affirm or deny any part of a conversation, which passed during their intoxication two years before ? Whose honour or life is safe, if a fraud or felony can be established by men who, relating long conversations, say they were drunk at the time they heard them ? Had these men professed, in the outset of their evidence, that they were deceived by having been made drunk, such a fact (had I countenanced it) would have been worthy of the most serious discussion : But in their examination in chief, they do not pretend to have been drunk at all ; it is in their cross-examination that they first introduced the circumstance of drunkenness ; and that, not as an imputation on me, but as an excuse in exculpation of the then obvious and gross inconsistency of

their evidence. Here, Sir, I submit, it might have been justly expected by me, that the whole evidence of men, who, on cross-examination, had confessed themselves intoxicated, ought to have been struck out of the minutes of the proceedings. And here I must observe, that although many objections were made by me to various evidence and different questions, they no where appear in the printed report of this trial. As to the two other men, they were two substitutes, not engaged by me at all, but by men called militia insurers, who paid them their bounty; receipts for their marching guinea were also taken from them: but the evidence proves this circumstance to have originated in hurry and mistake, contrary to the general practice, and through the inadvertency of the recruiting serjeants. But supposing these agreements had not been read, my order, as proved by one of the prosecutor's witnesses, as well as by Captain Mason, were always to read and explain those agreements to the substitutes, and which both he and Captain Mason swear were duly observed. If the serjeant did not do so, was he so far my agent for the purpose of defrauding another without my concurrence? and by what law could I be responsible for his not doing that which I positively ordered him to do? If the complexion of the case, subsequent to my causing these receipts to be taken, is to bear on this question, I entreat the House to look to the evidence of the Duke of Richmond; it will there be found that I communicated the circumstance of the men having signed these receipts to his Grace, to whom the men had complained, informing him, that when I enlisted the men, I agreed to give a certain sum of money, including their marching guineas and that that circumstance was expressed in the receipt for the bounty. His Grace in several conversations gave it as his opinion, that the men who had given receipts could not make any farther claim on that account, always supposing such receipts to have been bona fide given—that this matter was peculiarly referred to his Grace; and according to the prosecutor's letter, dated March 1794, the matter rested as a disputable question with him. I beg farther to refer to the production and full discussion of these receipts among my officers at Shoreham; and however irregular some may have deemed these receipts, yet there, and in all our meetings, neither the prosecutor nor any other man ever suggested the idea of a fraud; and he has ever represented me so pertinacious in my opinion in my receipts, as constantly, and in all companies, to assert their validity, to commit them into all hands, to declare my readiness to try the question, and to leave them to the captains to do any thing that might draw an inquiry on them. Are these the acts of a man who has com-



mitted or authorized a fraud? I am confident, that the House, considering such facts as these, as jurymen, and scrutinizing the mind of their fellow countryman, would find it impossible to make up their minds to a verdict of internal fraud against a man who has ever shewn himself provoking every sort of inquiry and discussion on these very receipts. As to the eighth article, which accuses me of deducting a guinea from the bounties of the soldier, alledging it to be so done for cloathing, and converting it to my own use, I answer, whether the guinea was deducted from the bounty, or whether it was agreed that it should be expended in sloop-clothing for the recruit before he was enlisted, is a matter of fact which the House will judge of, on due reference to the evidence before them. But the proof that the men did contract for sloop-cloathing is, that it appears in evidence that they complained that that contract had not been fully performed on the part of the regimental taylor, and that this also was the system at the Board, a system adopted on the suggestion of the prosecutor himself to prevent desertion. One witness has sworn so in pointed terms; and that he informed all his men before they engaged with him, that the deposit and payment of the guinea at the Board would be required of them when sworn in, for which reason he added a guinea to their bounty. Four out of the six witnesses on this charge, and those adduced by the prosecutor himself, are men engaged by this militia insurer. But that I converted the guinea to my own use, I solemnly deny; and it is as solemnly proved on the trial, that I never touched it, but that the regimental taylor had it, and gave value for it. Each man had for his guinea a coat, waistcoat, and hat, and ultimately a pair of breeches also: they all had their regimental cloathing in addition, and in the same year also. This plan of cloathing was to benefit the service, and not for my own emolument; and although some men might have worn their sloop-cloathing a few months extraordinary, yet upon the whole, the regiment was benefited, and no man was deprived of one single article of cloathing which Government allows. Sir, the 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th charges are dividable into two heads. The first, a corrupt receipt of monies for a corrupt purpose, and the converting to my own use of that money. The second, an embezzlement of monies taken for an innocent or indifferent purpose. The first point comprehends the discharge of deserters and other men, giving money to provide a substitute; the second, the non-immediate application of monies destined to provide the regiment with recruits. To the first, I entreat the House to observe, that having undertaken the recruitment of the regiment in part, as other colonels of a regiment have done, I

did conceive myself at liberty, on some occasions, to permit, under some circumstances, men to quit the regiment, on their putting into my hands a sum to procure a man in their place; and I did conceive that if I did continue, without intermission, that recruitment, I fully, and not corruptly discharged the engagement which I so contracted. On this principle I did discharge some of the men who were deserters; but no more than three in number, in the course of three years. I still solemnly deny, as I did on the trial, that I knew of the discharge of two men, mentioned in the charge; one or two other men, not being deserters, I also discharged, whose particular situation rendered them anxious to quit, and who were considered by me as not fit for the service, after having made a sufficient inquiry on that point. These sums were openly proposed and openly received for the purpose of finding other men; but I in no case took such sums of money as a bribe, nor had any conception that I did not discharge my engagement, by keeping my recruiting parties in activity under a general order.

The House, Sir, cannot draw an inference from hence that the money paid was a bribe to me to pardon and discharge the men, for the evidence proves that the money was expressly taken by me in order, with it, to find another man; that I received it as such, and on written documents that I acknowledged it for that purpose received—I have expressly charged myself with that money for that purpose. Can the House then conclude it was originally given for another purpose, than the evidence proves it was given for, or infer an intention contrary to the fact? Sir, I beg leave to ask, what constitute the prominent features of a man corruptly receiving money for a corrupt purpose? What but extortion, rapacity, and secrecy. I have not taken advantage of the situation of any man having deserted, nor proportioned my demand to his expectation of punishment, nor requested my name not to be mentioned, nor burned nor obliterated the proving documents; but, on the contrary, have ever given them away against myself. The whole purport and tenor of my language, written or verbal, was not what should be given, that punishment or duty might be evaded; but, if urged by repeated intercession, if the case was to be yielded to, what was the sum that would furnish another man, and supply the place of him, whose peculiar case procured his discharge? On this principle also, of recruiting, I received a fund to provide for that recruitment, from the hands of the principals, drawn by ballot; and certainly, if I had not thought I was acting conscientiously, I never should have so acted, with that publicity and openness which are the prominent characters of all the acts of which I am accused. It is

true that deserters have, in some instances, been posted to persons from whom I have received money to provide a man for, but this was from no particular order of mine ; it was the general practice of the Board, adopted by the clerk of it—a practice which I found when I came to the Board; and which, not thinking either criminal or erroneous, I never contradicted, but left the clerk of the Board to act according to his own discretion, and which by no means destroyed the obligation in me to find another man also ;—that discretion he has sworn he exercised. The monies, arising from all these circumstances, constituted publicly a fund in my hands, to be applied in finding men for the regiment. That fund I so employed, and it was every day diminishing ; it was every day applied to the purposes for which it was received, not specifically applied, but generally applied. If I originally received that fund for the purpose of getting substitutes, and was daily so applying it, I beg seriously to ask the House, when that embezzlement began ? and by what it is proved ? If it was given me for a purpose which I instantly set about executing, and daily executed, how is the crime of retainer or embezzlement proved ? These men could not be procured in a day, nor a month. The principals could not have procured them immediately ; I could not immediately. It was a fund which I acknowledge to have received for a given purpose, which purpose I never delayed executing ; which, in my hands, was solely applicable to that purpose, and to be accounted for by me. I dispatched parties ; I had serjeants and corporals constantly on the recruit ; I called them to the Board ; I severely reprimanded them, whenever I found they had been negligent. I gave them unlimited orders to procure them ; I told them to get them at all events. I entered, at another time, into a competition with the recruiting for the city of London ; I gave two guineas more than they allowed. I held additional Boards, and got many of the best men, who otherwise would have enlisted with them. I paid all the expences of enlisting, myself—the bounties, myself. I applied the fund I had received to the purpose for which it was received. Neglect and delay (if even they had existed) in applying this fund, might call down upon me a military censure ; but my moral character, my character as a gentleman, as a man, will not, I trust, under these circumstances, stand impeached, when nothing but the suspension of my command prevented me from expending every shilling I had received, and when that very suspension found me, in the summer of 1795, in the very act of expending it. To the charge of rejecting fit men, and of engaging unfit men, on account of the difference of bounties, I must refer the House to the

evidence, to learn whether I myself, in any instance, so did ; or whether even my agents did so, by my orders, for the reasons alledged in the charge. I do not fear that the House will find that fact wilfully done by me, or any of those whom I employed ; and although it may be true, that the bounty given for men was not always co-extensive with the sum received for that purpose, yet the saving resulting from thence it never was my intention to convert to my own use ; but, on the contrary, I have proved, before the Court Martial, my having expended on the regiment a sum of above 400*l.* which far exceeds any savings I could have in hand from any surplus of bounty, and no part of which is allowed by Government. To the charge of wilfully keeping the regiment incomplete, though it be true that the severe epithets of the Articles of War are not introduced as in the other charges, yet I cannot refrain from observing to the House, that though this regiment, at the time of my suspension from my command, was deficient in numbers 88, yet when it marched out of the county, and when I first took the command of it, it was at least 164 deficient, as appears by the weekly statements. The Middlesex regiments are ever difficult to keep complete, and have been much more so during the late extraordinary exertions both for the army, and the manning of His Majesty's navy ; and that during the whole time I recruited the regiment, my recruiting parties were daily employed, under unlimited orders, to get men. That they were unlimited, I appeal to my own letter, dated in June, 1795, urging my recruiting serjeants to get men, and before any information was given me that I was to be brought to a court-martial, much less of the specific articles of which I was to be accused ; so long, indeed, before I had any such notice, that it appears, from a letter from General Lascelles, on that subject, which I hold in my hand, that I had not notice until the 1st of September, 1795 ; and I beg leave, Sir, to add, that I ought not to have been charged with the average deficiency of the regiment, nor farther than for those men whom I was bound to provide for the regiment. Sir, as to the charge of making a false entry in my orderly book, relative to a decision of a regimental court-martial, I can say no more than that I solemnly deny the wording of that entry ; and that it does not appear on the evidence, that I ever gave any order on the subject, except by telling the serjeant himself, whom I restored to his rank, to go to my serjeant-major, and to tell him to put him (the restored man) in orders again, as serjeant, without, in any manner, alluding to a court-martial at all. The man did so himself ; he communicated my general order to the serjeant-major, from whose misconception of the man's situ-

ation, the wording of the order must have become erroneous. To the fact of the erroneous return, my answer is, that it was entirely unknown to me, and occasioned by the circumstance of the regimental clerk being ignorant of the discharge of some men, whose names were, improperly, by him inserted in the roll; but this seems to me so solely a military offence, that I shall be silent upon it, referring the House to the evidence, for their more full satisfaction, adding only, that that erroneous return was corrected a very few days after it was made, and the instant that it was discovered. Sir, to compress the substance of my defence into such a compass as could retain the attention of the House, I do not conceive possible, considering the voluminous size of my trial; but what I have not been able to do, that I trust the House will, on examining into my fuller and printed defence, see whether it accords with the evidence produced before the Court; and whence, I trust, that though my conduct, in point of military regularity, may not be found wholly unblameable, yet my moral character, in my civil capacity, will not necessarily be found to deserve, that, after the punishment I have already submitted to, the effect of those epithets should remain attached to it. I farther must beg leave to intimate to the House, that it may possibly appear to them, that the Court-Martial did exceed their jurisdiction, in putting me on my trial on several articles of accusation, for which I conceive I was responsible solely in my civil capacity; and that, as I protested against that excess of jurisdiction, and called on the Court, or Judge Advocate, to take the opinion of His Majesty's law officers, on those points—and which I do not learn was done—I say, it may possibly be the opinion of the House, that should they even be disposed to carry my punishment still farther, in so doing, they must necessarily give their sanction to that which I humbly conceive was an unconstitutional act. Sir, I have not yet learned that there does exist any precedent of a proceeding in this House against any of the members, grounded on any military sentence or proceedings. Dear to me as the rights and privileges of this House are, it is not for me, in my situation, to stand, as it were, in their defence, but to leave to the House, in its wisdom, to decide and discuss how far a precedent, established in my person, may affect the relative situation of the House and the army; and what effect or possible control on the House such a precedent may produce, by seeming to authorize, in times less constitutional, under a less firm government than that under which we live, a virtual influence of the military over the members of the House. Perfectly resigned to the determination of the House, in which I hope I have hitherto preserved an unsullied character, I here close

my defence, submitting it to a comparison with the evidence on your table, and which, doubtless, will receive a full consideration.

Mr. Cawthorne then retired.

General SMITH observed, that the task which had fallen to his lot, of instituting an investigation into the personal misconduct of a member of that House, was to him, and must be to any man, a painful and ungracious task ; but the performance of his duty, as a member of parliament, was to him paramount to all other considerations. The matter he had now taken up, he felt to be a matter of great delicacy, and still of greater importance ; nor would it be necessary for him to trespass long on the patience of the House, as every gentleman must be acquainted with the merits of the cause, and the severe but just sentence which the scandalous conduct of the unfortunate member had incurred. Neither would it be necessary to go over the grounds upon which the Court-Martial had founded that sentence. It was a decision deeply connected with the interests of the country, and as nearly connected with the character of the House ; and it was such as might justly be expected from the integrity, and the nice sense of honour that actuated the Court who pronounced it. For his part, he had read the proceedings with great care and attention ; and the more he examined them, the more he was convinced of the justice of the sentence, and the more he was confirmed in every idea he had formed on the subject. The opinion he had taken up, was not adopted from light motives ; it was impressed on his mind by a due regard for the institution of the militia, and the laws framed for its government. It was with regret, if not with indignation, he perceived that the crimes imputed to the unfortunate member, and of which he was convicted, were not, as he had attempted to show, an error in judgment, or the casual conduct of a day ; it appeared, on the contrary, that he had persevered in them for a considerable time, and with a degree of pertinacity not easily to be accounted for. There were two or three points to which the honourable general wished to call the attention of the House ; and first, as to a conversation said to have been held by this unfortunate member with another colonel, it appeared from the evidence, that the defence he had set up, on the score of inadvertency, was not founded in fact. Another speech of his should likewise be attended to : when it was observed to him, that his conduct was disapproved of by his General, what was his reply ?—" I don't care a damn for my General ; my brother officers agree with me that I should not, and I will not." What terms are strong enough to reprobate such a speech ; and should the important command of a regiment of militia be entrusted to the

man that could utter it? But the situation of this unfortunate officer was with him but a very secondary consideration; it was the fatal effects that might ensue from such an example, that he anxiously looked to. His brother officers, so far from countenancing his conduct, on the contrary, frequently expressed their surprize at his having so long withheld from his men what was granted to them by Parliament, and could scarcely be induced to believe he could be guilty of such offences. General Smith then adverted to the time when Colonel Cawthorne had thought proper to pursue this shameful line of conduct; it was at a time when there was considerable apprehension of riot, tumult, and discontent in the regiments; and a behaviour so mean and unjust was but ill calculated, by its example, to enforce those laws by which order and obedience should be maintained. This consideration was surely no small aggravation of his guilt. The honourable general next referred to the address made to the Court-Martial by Colonel Cawthorne, and shewed, that from the tenor of it he must have been conscious of his guilt, and of the perilous situation in which he stood. The establishment and utility of the militia were not the least important objects of the present consideration. From the time of its institution to the present day, it had been so much improved, that those who opposed it at first were now its warmest and most stedfast advocates. And, indeed, such a body of men, capable of taking up arms on the first alarm, and to whom the country must look for its defence in the hour of danger, could not be preserved too pure, and should not be exposed to the contagion of corrupt and profligate example: on the contrary, the officers who command them should be men of unsullied character, and to whom they should look up with admiration and respect. The militia was the constitutional defence of the country, and those invested with the important trust of its command should not be men capable of violating the regulations by which alone it could subsist. But all these regulations had been scandalously broken through by the unfortunate member, and his conduct had well deserved all the severity of martial law. His conduct had been proved to be fraudulent and corrupt, and, as such, must affect the character and dignity of the House, of which he is a member. The honourable general had searched into all the precedents of this nature, but none afforded so strong and flagrant a case as the present. It was not only the degree of corruption it exhibited, but the mischievous consequences that such an example must produce, that demanded the peculiar attention and censure of the House. This was the view of the subject which engaged him to move the expulsion of the unfortunate member. He had been in-



duced to bring forward this motion, not from any personal motive, or any party consideration, which could have no influence with him on such a subject. It was his own individual opinion, suggested from no quarter, and communicated to no one member of the House; he was even ignorant by whom his motion would be seconded. The subject, indeed, of itself, was sufficient to point out to every gentleman what line of conduct he would pursue. What could be more dangerous than to entrust to corrupt and improper hands the natural and constitutional defence of the country, which, under such baneful influence, would become the most likely instrument of overturning its liberties! No; a trust so sacred should only be reposed in the hands of Honour, Integrity, and Independence, and not be liable to be sought after from any sordid views of personal interest and convenience. Without this caution, farewell that constitutional guard of our liberty and quiet! General Smith again insisted on the fatal consequences that might ensue, from leaving an example of such shameful corruption unpunished, and warned the House not to participate in the guilt of one of its members, by conniving at its enormity. He then concluded by moving, "That the said John Fenton Cawthorne, Esquire, having been found guilty of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, tenth, eleventh, and thirteenth articles of charge, mentioned in the said proceedings, in the terms expressed in the sentences given thereon by the said Court-Martial, be expelled this House."

Mr. WIGLEY rose to state his reasons for disagreeing from the motion proposed by the honourable general, and for proposing an amendment to it. This was a question upon which there could not, he was convinced, exist any thing like prejudice on the one side or on the other. He conceived that the House should pause before it came to a decision, and not think any gentleman competent to form a judgment who had not read the minutes of the trial. He confessed he had perused it with infinite care and attention, and he was firmly persuaded that the unfortunate member did not act so much from corrupt motives, as from an error in judgement. He then proceeded to examine the articles preferred against Mr. Cawthorne, and the evidence by which they were proved. He contended, that although the conduct of that unfortunate gentleman might be improper and unmilitary, it did not appear that he meant to commit a fraud, because there were no marks of fraud in his conduct. It never was the practice of a person intending to commit a fraud, to speak of it to every body, yet Mr. Cawthorne did, and therefore it was clear, that though he might have acted improperly, it was not intentionally. Mankind were all liable to error, and he trusted

the House would not feel it necessary to treat the unfortunate gentleman with rigour. The charge of peculation, which had been stated with respect to the marching guineas, he considered not made out on the trial; for, on a perusal of the minutes, gentlemen would find that the men, when the troops marched to Hounslow, were paid. Much stress has been laid by the honourable General on a harsh and intemperate expression used by the unfortunate gentleman; but if referred to folio 107, he would find that Colonel Cawthorne wrote to his agent, to take General Howe's advice and direction in his cooler judgement, and by this letter it was manifest that he had no objection to pay the marching guineas. In folio 174 of the Report, it would be found that this fact was more strongly stated; and here he must observe, that the amount of what was pronounced a fraud stood thus:—Out of 533 guineas, he had paid all away at Hounslow, except 101; so that if peculation was his object, he would certainly have kept the whole. In November, 1794, the officers had a meeting; they did not then attribute fraud to the unfortunate member; they only came to a resolution, that the men were entitled to their marching guineas, and that they ought to be paid. The learned gentleman next adverted to the evidence of R. Jones, the high constable, with respect to the charge of taking money for substitutes. In this particular it would be found that he did not act through a corrupt intention, but through motives of humanity; for in three years not more than three men were discharged, and two of the three were unfit for service. The charge of taking money for substitutes certainly could not bear out the honourable general in the charge of corruption against Mr. Cawthorne, for that money never went into his pockets, though it might into those of his agent; and here he must remark, that the unfortunate member expended, of his own property, four hundred guineas, for the advantage of the regiment; and it was not very likely that a man, who was liberal in such large sums, should be guilty of a fraud to obtain small ones. It might be said, that the Court-martial having found Mr. Cawthorne guilty, rendered it unnecessary for the House to examine into the merits of the case, and precluded farther inquiry; but he for one could not be satisfied, except from an examination of the proceedings, and he hoped the House would not be convinced with less. The honourable General had talked about precedents, but he had not produced any; indeed he was sure that he could not produce any precedent in which the sentence of a court-martial had been made the foundation of an expulsion. He had not examined the journals himself; but a gentleman, upon whose accuracy he could rely, had taken that trouble,

and there appeared no such precedent as far back as the year 1610. It has been said, that if full effect is not given to the sentence of a court-martial, that it may be productive of bad consequences to the discipline of the army; but if these sentences were carried to the extent now proposed, they might be productive of consequences much more serious; for courts-martial, in the hands of a despotic monarch, would then become a very serious engine of oppression.—With these impressions, he should move to put off the farther consideration of this business for three months; or, if the House would not consent to that proposition, he should then move for some farther delay, in order that the House might have full time to consider the subject. He therefore concluded with moving, “That the debate be adjourned till this day three months.”

General MACLEOD complimented General Smith on the purity of his motives in bringing this matter forward. He agreed with him that it was necessary to refer the conduct of military men to a court-martial, whenever there was reason to suspect the propriety of such conduct. He was most willing to allow that this was necessary for the discipline of the army, on which so many important interests depended. He would say farther, that the militia was a more constitutional guard to the safety of this country, than a standing army, although he was a member of the latter. He was conscious that the honourable general would not have made his motion, but upon due consideration. He agreed too with the unfortunate member, whose conduct was under discussion, that a sentence of a court-martial, “that he had behaved scandalously,” was more severe than a sentence of perpetual banishment, or of death. He acquiesced in the necessity of supporting the honour of the military character—in the necessity of supporting the honour of the House of Commons—in the propriety of not permitting a person who had acted scandalously to continue a member of that House. He agreed that the sentence of the Court-martial, in this case, was perfectly just—that that Court had done honour to themselves, and justice to their country, by their conduct. But he took this matter up, on a footing very different from any consideration which these topics involved; he did not think that the House of Commons was bound by any of the proceedings of a court-martial; he did not think that they were bound to enter into an examination of the whole of that voluminous book which was upon their table. The view he had of the subject was quite different. The object he had in view was to prevent any member of that House from being subjected to expulsion merely on the authority of a court-martial; for if it was a rule in that House, that any officer who happened to be a member of that House, and

had either neglected his duty, or acted contrary to what was alleged to be his duty in a military capacity, and was broke or cashiered by a court-martial—if this, he said, was to be a reason for his expulsion, then there would be an extraordinary increase to the influence of the Crown. Any Member of that House might be tried and broke by a court-martial which was appointed by the Crown, and then some person in that House, attached to a corrupt Minister, who might be supposed hereafter to exist, (not to the present, for we all knew him to be immaculate) might move for the expulsion of such a Member, and then upon the authority of this case, he must be expelled if the proceedings of the court-martial were to be made the basis of expulsion. This case, therefore, appeared to him to be a very dangerous precedent. The honourable General had quoted no case as a precedent that a Member of that House had been expelled from that House because he was broke by a court-martial. He believed there was not one instance of that. He remembered, on the contrary, the case of a noble Lord who had been censured by a court-martial, and who afterwards was so far from being expelled, that he was a Member of Administration. This occurred during the American war. The sentence was ordered to be read to the army, as this was to the militia. But was that sentence followed up by a vote of expulsion? Certainly not: and yet that was a charge of a much higher nature than the charge brought against the unfortunate Member whose case was now before the House. He had quoted to the House a case in which the crime was infinitely greater against the country than the present, and yet no motion was made for expulsion in that case. Viewing, therefore, the whole of the subject now before the House, he must say he did not wish the motion to be carried into execution, because it tended to establish a precedent by which some future corrupt Minister, or some future ambitious Monarch, might obtain the expulsion of any Member of that House who opposed the proceedings of Government. Viewing the subject in this light, he must vote for any motion by which this question of expulsion was likely to be defeated.

The original motion and amendment being read,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that in consequence of the motion which the honourable General had thought proper to bring forward that night, he found it necessary to make some observations. If, in consideration of the present question, gentlemen thought it essentially requisite to enter into the whole body of evidence laid before the court-martial, and at that moment on the table of the House, he was ready to admit, though he had considered the proceedings of

the court-martial, that he had not scrutinized them with that degree of minuteness on which he could, if such a measure were necessary, ground his vote; but the question did not, in his opinion, depend upon a careful and strict attention to that minuteness; for it was fit and proper to give credit to the proceedings of any court, legal or ecclesiastical; the sentence of a court-martial, which, in its judicial state, was duly authorized by the law of the land, was also entitled to the attention of the House. The proceedings of the court-martial afforded *prima facie* evidence, which rendered the unfortunate person, who was the object of them, unfit to continue a Member of that House, and by which the House was loudly called upon, in vindication of its own honour, to decide on the sentence. Two questions naturally offered themselves to his consideration:—The first was, whether the charges proved by the decision of the court-martial were such, as to make the unfortunate subject of them unworthy of a seat in Parliament? The second, Whether any plea has been made, or any thing furnished on the opposite part, to afford a presumption, that the decision was not just, or such as the House was not bound to regard? He would not go so far as to say, that the decision of a Court of Law was such as to exact, in all cases, without previous examination, an implicit deference, because there might appear instances where strong proofs could be brought against the validity of that decision; and this principle might apply with much more propriety to Military Tribunals, which were not Courts of Record, and where the process was not so exact and minute. But the question was, whether, in the present case, such a counter statement had been made to the sentence of the court-martial, as would warrant the House in not adhering to the decision of a Court established by the law of the land. He had attentively listened to his learned and honourable friend who had moved the amendment, and to the honourable General who spoke last, but their arguments and statements had produced no conviction in his mind that there was any thing that could counteract that decision. It had been argued, that the Journals of the House furnished no precedent which could sanction the motion. He was ready to admit they did not: but if the principle on which the motion was founded was in itself just, it certainly did not stand in need of any precedent. The honourable General had in the course of his speech alluded to the case of a noble Lord, now no more, as a precedent against the motion. He would say nothing harshly of that noble Lord, and he would only observe, that the two cases were extremely different. For the crime of which that noble Lord was convicted by a court-martial was not a crime which in itself

proved him unworthy of public trust : it amounted solely to disobedience of military orders, and such a disobedience might, in some instances, be attended with success. The conduct of that noble Lord was, by the decision of a court-martial, proved to have prevented a decisive issue to a brilliant action. But if an officer, by disobedience to orders, should succeed in obtaining a victory, though found guilty by the sentence of a court-martial, he might, from the nature of the transaction, be entitled to and receive the thanks of that House. The cases were widely different—in that of the noble Lord, his military capacity was alone affected ; in the present case, there was a stigma affixed to the reputation of the person, and that of the foulest kind—embezzlement, fraud, and conduct unbecoming the character of a gentleman. The House should therefore bear in mind the principle, that they proceeded on the motion, not because the court-martial had found him generally guilty of misconduct in a military capacity, but because they had found him guilty of charges which rendered him unworthy of a seat in that House. To prevent, therefore, the possibility of applying the present motion, as a precedent hereafter, that the House should generally proceed on the sentence of a court-martial, he would propose, that the specific motives on which the court-martial had found the unfortunate person who was the subject of discussion, guilty, should be recorded on the Journals of the House. Such a proceeding would, in his opinion, completely guard against the possibility of any inference which might be unfairly drawn, that the resolution of the House of Commons had been founded merely on the sentence of the court-martial. He concluded by observing, that he trusted the House would agree to the motion, amended in that specific manner, as it embraced an object of great and general consequence.

General MACLEOD said a few words in explanation, importing that he did not mean to compare the character of the noble Lord alluded to, to that of the object of the present discussion ; but only, in illustration of his principle, that the sentence of a court-martial was not a ground for expulsion from that House.

General TARLETON condemned the conduct of Mr. Cawthorne, as a military man, but as a Member of Parliament doubted the propriety of the House proceeding to expel any one of its Members, from the evidence of any Court whatever. He was inclined to think they could not regularly proceed to such a measure, without hearing evidence of the guilt of the party, at the bar of the House. He said this not from any idea of screening the unfortunate person, nor of affixing any blame to the sentence of the court-martial ; quite the contrary ; but he was concerned for the regularity of the pro-

ceedings of the House, and afraid of the precedent which was about to be established.

Mr. FRANCIS said, that differing entirely from the sentiments expressed by his honourable friend who spoke last (General Tarleton) he thought himself bound to give the reason of his opinion, though he had not originally intended to have spoken at all on the subject. That it appeared to him that the House, in the function and duty which they were to exercise this night, did not assume, and could not hold, any appellat jurisdiction whatever from the sentence of a court-martial. We have no authority to revise the proceedings, or to confirm or reverse the sentence. The sole purpose for which, as I conceive, the proceedings were ordered to be laid on the table was, that the Members might have the opportunity and the means of judging, for the satisfaction of their own consciences, and for the direction of their own conduct on another point, whether the sentence of the court-martial, as it appeared on the face of the proceedings, and without admitting even into our thoughts any extrajudicial evidence or argument, was or was not warranted? The next question for ourselves also would be, whether the facts, supposing them to be truly found and justly qualified, would permit the House to continue the high trust of a Member of Parliament in the person who was the object of such a verdict?

Mr. COURTENAY said, that the honourable gentleman (Mr. Wigley) seemed to preclude any person from speaking who had not read the proceedings of the court-martial. He should therefore claim his privilege, as he had carefully read every word of those proceedings, and certainly with no malevolent disposition. He could have wished to have discovered some alleviating circumstances in Colonel Cawthorne's case, which might have had some influence, and, perhaps, been of service to him in this day's debate. At the same time, he must, in candour and justice, declare, that the court-martial, in their whole proceedings on the trial of that honourable gentleman (as far as he could judge) had acted with the greatest impartiality and justice. They had investigated the whole of the charges with temper, moderation, and patience; and in their sentence, had made exceptions in Colonel Cawthorne's favour as far as the case would admit.

Mr. Courtenay added, that perhaps he was rather prejudiced in favour of a court-martial; he had passed his youth in the service, and had always observed, that a high spirit of honour, justice, and generosity had uniformly actuated their conduct. He was sorry there had been a necessity for so many trials of late, especially in the *militia*, which he always looked up to as the great constitutional defence of



this country.—A colonel of militia should consider himself as the guardian and protector of every man under his command ; it was an honourable and distinguished station. He should pride himself in ascertaining clearly, and explaining accurately to every private in his regiment, what were his just emoluments in pay, cloathing, and every species of bounty allowed him, either by the Legislature, or His Majesty's regulations. An English soldier was jealous of his rights, and the moment he suspected that he was deceived or imposed on, he became sullen and discontented ;—contracted a dislike to the service,—disregarded discipline and subordination, and became mutinous in proportion to his sense and spirit ; treat him with justice and generosity, he will esteem and love his officer, and in the hour of danger he will never desert him. This is his character ; and it's a noble one ! But how much more is it incumbent on gentlemen, who, selected to serve in the militia, are men of great fortune, rank, and influence in the community ! They have every proud incentive to serve their country ; to conciliate the privates of their respective corps to their duty ; a man who was personally attached to *them*, would look up to *them* as his friends and protectors : and an officer of the militia becomes irretrievably degraded in their eyes, the instant they suspect him of converting their pittance to his own emolument. It were devoutly to be wished, that the colonel's pay, both in the land and the militia, was his whole emolument ; as the commercial spirit of the cloathing contractor, sometimes sullied the dignity of the military officer. There should be no ground, no room for suspicion in the soldier's mind ; it would then be impossible to deceive or mislead him. Till *that* is done, surely it would not be imprudent to explain, to every man in a regiment of militia, what is his subsistence, and what incidental emoluments he is entitled to. This is no complicated business ;—every company should have a printed copy, that there might be no possibility of mistake or misrepresentation. The advantage of such a regulation is obvious.

Mr. Courtenay said, he meant to say nothing invidious, nothing personal ; the honourable gentleman against whom the motion had been made, he was persuaded, knew that he had earnestly wished, that this court-martial had not taken place ;—and he was happy to find, that the two Generals, (Sir W. Howe and General Lascelles) always distinguished for their humane and generous conduct, had condescended to exert themselves, to have the soldiers' claims adjusted and settled, without bringing these disgraceful proceedings before the public.

Mr. Courtenay concluded by saying, he was sorry for the occa-

sion, and lamented the necessity, but he must give his vote for the honourable General's motion.

Mr. BOUVERIE opposed the original motion, on the ground that courts-martial being appointed by the Crown, might be subject to improper influence.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL observed, that the question was comprised in the following consideration, whether the House were not bound to take notice of a sentence, as far as it related to an individual belonging to their own body, and in whose case their honour was implicated? He had perused the evidence laid before the court-martial for the purpose of ascertaining whether the crime of which the unfortunate gentleman was accused, referred only to military law? He had found, that some of the charges were merely military, while others accused him of fraud and embezzlement, which rendered him incapable of acting in a public capacity.

General SMITH in reply, disclaimed all motives for the part he had taken in this affair, except those of wishing to support the cause of public justice and the honour of the House of Commons.

The question was then put, and the House divided,

For the amendment, 12—Against it, 108.

Then the said proposed question of adjournment was, with leave of the House withdrawn.

And it appearing to the House, that John Fenton Cawthorne, Esquire, a member of this House, has been found guilty, by a court-martial, of divers charges, in respect of some of which he is found guilty of having acted fraudulently, and in a scandalous and infamous manner, unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman;

Resolved, That the said John Fenton Cawthorne, Esquire, be expelled this House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee to consider farther of a supply to be granted to His Majesty. He said, he understood it was intended to enter into a discussion of the supply to the King of Sardinia. If that discussion was to take place, he should be sorry it were to take place at so late an hour, and in so thin a House. He therefore should propose that the discussion should take place on the report.

General TARLETON acquiesced in this proposition.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply, and, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, resolved, that it is the opinion of the Committee, that 200,000*l.* be granted to His Majesty to enable His Majesty to make good his engagement with the King of Sardinia.—Passed.

The House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider farther of ways and means for raising a supply,

Mr. Chancellor PITT stated, that he had to propose the funding of four millions and an half navy debt, &c. which he had divided into two classes. The one he proposed to be allowed 105l. in the 5 per cents for the first four months, and the others 104l. so that there would be 4 per cent. to the first class, and 3 per cent. to the second class. These added together, would amount to about three and a half for the whole; to this was to be added a small allowance for discount.

He moved a resolution to this effect, which was carried.—Report to-morrow.

*Tuesday, 3d May.*

The Chairman of the Committee of ways and means brought up the report for the adoption of the House.

The resolution—"It is the opinion of this Committee, that the sum of 200,000l. be granted to His Majesty, to enable him to make good his engagements with the King of Sardinia," was read the first and second time: and, on the question being put, "that the Resolution do pass,"

Mr. FOX remarked, that though he never approved of this subsidy, yet as it had gone on year after year, the House, he conceived, was bound to continue it, unless such a change had taken place in the situation of affairs, as to furnish good grounds for withholding it. If any degree of credit was to be attached to general rumour, that difference in the state of affairs had occurred, which would render the discontinuance of the subsidy a measure of prudence. It was obvious, that his Sardinian Majesty had indicated a disposition to conclude a separate peace with France. It was not his intention now to discuss, whether that measure would be advantageous to this country, or not, though he was of opinion that it would be advantageous to this country, rather than not. If we think it an advantage that we should go on with the war, we should at least ascertain how far the King of Sardinia is inclined or able to give an adequate co-operation before we consent to a continuance of his subsidy. If, on the other hand, a separate peace be his object, it behoved the House to know how far His Majesty's Ministers have given their consent to such a measure, because, if we consider the original engagement, "that no individual member of the confederacy should be at liberty to make peace without the concurrence of the rest," they

had no right to accede to the proposition any more than he had to adopt it without complying with the general stipulation. If no such measure can be adopted without the consent of this country, it is natural to inquire, and material to know, how far it would be right in this country to prevent his Sardinian Majesty from making a separate peace, if the urgency of his situation required it, or a reasonable opportunity occurred. If this subsidy be the cause of his Sardinian Majesty continuing the war, if he has not at heart the objects professed by the rest of the confederacy, the subsidy is a burden to this country, and not a benefit to his own subjects, who are exposed to all the calamities of a hopeless conflict. It was, he said, for these reasons, incumbent on His Majesty's Ministers to give the House some farther information on the subject, before the House consented to enable His Majesty to fulfil his engagement.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that, if the House had been induced to grant this subsidy to his Sardinian Majesty for several years, they were bound to continue it, both in point of honour and in point of prudence, for, he had no difficulty in declaring, that the whole conduct of his Sardinian Majesty, from the first moment in which the subsidy was granted to the present, had afforded one uniform example of honour and fidelity, and an example highly worthy the imitation of the other powers. He could not, with propriety and the regard that was due to the general service, enter so fully into a detail of the proceedings of his Sardinian Majesty as the nature of circumstances required for the purpose of his vindication; but, he denied that his Sardinian Majesty had ever manifested any desire for a separate peace. It was true, that, at a time when he was threatened with imminent danger, he opened an intercourse with the enemy, stating upon what terms he was willing to agree to an armistice.—The terms were, that he would enter into an armistice in conjunction with his friend and ally, the Emperor; but, upon no other condition. He immediately signified this to the Emperor, who refused his consent, and there the negotiation ended. During this intercourse, however, which did not proceed far, the enemy acquainted him that they would make a separate peace with him provided he would cede all the places they had conquered in his dominions, and unite his arms with theirs against the other allies. The King of Sardinia immediately, with a magnanimity that could never be too highly praised, but such as became his rank, and might have been expected from his character, refused to accept any proposition upon terms so impolitic and unjust. So far it was evident that his Sardinian Majesty entertained no idea of a separate peace, nor ever had gone farther in any intercourse with the enemy

than the pressing necessity of his situation compelled him, and the negotiation which he did enter into only ended in shewing that he neither would conclude a separate armistice, nor separate peace. He now put it to the House upon the statement of these facts, whether they had more or less inducement than formerly to fulfil their engagements. With respect to any recent events, upon which some objections might perhaps be grounded, he had not yet received any authentic communications; but as the vote only extended to the enabling His Majesty to grant the subsidy, there might be full opportunity for gaining ample information. So much for the satisfaction of those gentlemen who thought it the interest of this country to retain the King of Sardinia as our ally, but for the right honourable gentleman, who seemed to entertain a doubt, whether or not it would be more advantages for this country to do so notwithstanding the experience of past events, and the repeated testimonies we had received of the activity and vigor, and the exertion of the Sardinian forces, he must say, that this was the only way in which we could possibly put the King of Sardinia into a situation to make such terms with the enemy for a peace, as this country and the rest of the allies might admit to be comparatively and generally good. Upon that principle, therefore, he thought the right honourable gentleman ought to have been the last man in the House to object to a motion, in which the future honour and interests of this country were so much involved.

Mr. FOX explained that what he meant by saying that he thought a separate peace with Sardinia would be advantageous for this country, referred to the opportunity that his Sardinian Majesty would thereby have of mediating between other powers. He certainly did not mean to wish for a separate peace with Sardinia, exclusive of the interests of Great Britain and Austria; but so far as they were considered, the earlier a peace was concluded the better it would be, he thought, for all parties.

Mr. FRANCIS observed, in reply to the right honourable gentleman opposite, that the question before the House, *de facto*, was, whether this country ought to continue the subsidy to Sardinia? It was not necessary to consider how Sardinia had acted four months ago, but what her situation and probable mode of action would be now. If the information was authentic of the recent successes of the French in Lombardy, upon those successes would the probable mode of action of his Sardinian Majesty be founded, and so far were their opinions of the propriety of continuing the subsidy to be drawn; for if the determination of his Sardinian Majesty were founded, as it had been stated, upon the pressure of the enemy, it

was reasonable to conclude that he would consider the emergency of his situation, and not consult his magnanimity. Hence he might be induced to agree to a separate peace, for two reasons, and that without the least consideration or regard for the interests of his allies; first from the threats of the impending danger, and secondly by the temptations and interest which might be held out to him. As to confiding in the magnanimity of the King of Sardinia, he despised such confidence, and begged the House to look back to history for the character of the house of Savoy. It was fair to reason from such evidence, and he there found Sardinia had changed from side to side as often as her inclination or her interest predominated either way. If it were true that the Austrians had experienced such a defeat as would place Sardinia at the mercy of the enemy, he would then ask, whether it would be wise in this country to grant so great a subsidy to his Sardinian Majesty.

The SECRETARY AT WAR rescued the house of Savoy from the imputation of treachery; but, even admitting that his predecessors had violated the good faith of treaties, no reproach attached on the present illustrious monarch, who had religiously observed them. In regard to what had fallen from the honourable gentleman concerning the report of the enemy's successes in Italy, he said his right honourable friend had before stated that no authentic information had been yet received; and even admitting it were true, it did not at all affect their conduct in passing the vote of that evening, because the vote did not extend to the immediate granting of the money, but merely to enable His Majesty to do so upon the grounds his right honourable friend had stated.

General SMITH opposed the question, and expressed his apprehension, that, if it did pass, no practical good whatever would be derived from it to the country.

Mr. HARRISON said, the affairs of the King of Sardinia were in a very critical situation, and he cautioned the House against furnishing him with the weapons to turn against us in the event of an alliance with France. He therefore suggested to the House to defer the second reading of the resolution, at least till better information should arrive.

The question for the second reading of the resolution was then put and carried without a division.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL brought in a bill for the continuation of the alien act.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that in a variety of instances Ministers had made so improper use of the powers entrusted to them by this act, that he could not in his conscience vote for the farther con-

tinuation of it. He said that the late cause of the unfortunate M. Lameth was so flagrant an instance of the abuse of the powers committed to them, that he should oppose its principle in every stage. No sooner, the honourable gentleman observed, had that unfortunate gentleman set foot in this kingdom, where he expected to find an asylum from oppression, and to breathe the air of liberty, than he had been ordered by the imperious command of the Secretary of State to depart out of it. So wanton an exercise of power on the part of Ministers, in consequence of the powers vested in them by this act, was so derogatory to the general character of this nation, that the bill for the farther continuation of these powers should have his decided opposition.

The bill was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

Mr. SUMNER presented a petition from the subscribers to the Veterinary College, praying for the aid of Parliament.

Colonel TARLETON spoke in behalf of the petitioners. He stated it to be a plan that was entitled to every support, in as much as its object was to obviate the effects that so often arose from the ignorance and unskilfulness of persons entrusted with the care and management of horses and cattle.

Mr. FRANCIS opposed the petition, he wished the House to be informed what it meant; for his part he really knew not what the term of the petition implied. He knew of no such word in the English language as Veterinary, and he desired that some gentleman would endeavour to explain the etymology of it to him.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he had often witnessed applications for the assistance of Parliament, and he had often had a share in granting such requests, but he never knew an instance where he should do so with more satisfaction, than in the present one. The horse was a noble and useful animal, but he was hardly suffered to have fair play. He was entrusted to farriers, whose limited knowledge of his nature, prevented them from providing proper remedies for the disorders to which he was incident, and he too often fell a sacrifice to their ignorance. As to the definition which had been asked for, he thought it of little consequence to know the etymology of a word; it was quite sufficient, if it was a word, which, by usage, had acquired a certain definite idea to be annexed to it. Every one knew it to be the art which teaches men to know the nature and properties of the horse, and to administer to his complaints.

Alderman NEWNHAM expressed his approbation of the plan, and said, he should not oppose the granting a very considerable sum.



Sir WILLIAM SCOTT moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill for the better support and maintenance of curates of the church of England.

The SPEAKER said, that from what had occurred when this debate was adjourned, it might be expected that something should be stated as to the question of privilege. He had given his best attention to the Journals of the House, and was confirmed in the opinion he had already delivered. The House of Lords, he was convinced, had a right to originate this bill, and it was no infringement whatever on the privileges of the House of Commons, of which it was proper they should always be exceeding jealous. It was not the object of this bill to raise a tax, but to make a new distribution of the property of the church. It was true, the 12th of Queen Anne, on which the bill was founded, had originated in the Commons; but another Act (the 1st George I. chap. 12.) apparently more objectionable than the present, had originated in the House of Lords. The House would find that the competency of the House of Lords to originate a bill of this kind was unquestionable.

Mr. HUSSEY was of a different opinion from the Speaker.—He thought the House would depart from their privileges if they suffered this bill to pass. It gave a power to one description of persons to tax another.

Mr. JODDRELL said, he had been astonished, at the first reading of the bill, to find it had originated in the House of Lords. He conceived it to be, to all intents, a bill of supply, as it went to increase the salaries of curates out of the pockets of the rectors and vicars. He sincerely wished that the curates should have an increase of their stipends, but he wished that increase to be brought about in a legal, parliamentary, and unexceptionable manner.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the proper season for the honourable gentleman to make his objections to the bill, if he wished to save the time of the House, would be when the bill was in the Committee, as it would then be debated clause by clause. He defended the legality of the bill originating in the House of Lords, observing that it was not a bill that raised a new fund, or interfered in the direction of the public revenue granted by Parliament, but was only a different application of that which had been granted for the purpose, he conceived, of a private nature.

Lord WILLIAM RUSSEL thought the bill, instead of ameliorating the situation of curates, would have a contrary effect, by increasing their dependance upon the bishops.

The question was put for the Speaker leaving the chair, which was carried without a division.

The House then resolved itself into a committee on the bill, and many of the clauses were amended and agreed to. As an amendment to the clause, that 75*l.* be allowed to every curate, where the benefice amounted to 450*l.* per annum,

Mr. WILBERFORCE proposed, that to the curate's allowance should be added one-sixth of the excess of that sum; upon which a division took place—Ayes, 14; Noes, 33. Majority against the amendment, 19.

The bill was ordered to be re-committed.

*Wednesday, 4th May.*

There not being forty members present at four o'clock, an adjournment of course took place.

*Thursday, 5th May.*

The order of the day was read for the House to resolve itself into a committee of the whole House upon the wine-duty bill. Upon the motion for the Speaker's leaving the chair,

Mr. GREY said, as this bill was now in its progress through the House, there could exist no authority for levying any tax which was to be imposed by it, until it had passed; he was, however, informed, that the bill had already been put in force at Leith. A Mr. Murray had been obliged to pay the new duties on Spanish wines, which he had received of the ship Peggy, of that port. A similar payment had been made by Johnstone and Co. wine merchants, of Edinburgh. He was desirous of knowing if any order had been issued from the Treasury for that purpose. If Ministers were always determined to give to the taxes they imposed a retrospective effect; or to make their bills have the force of laws before they had gone through that House? He had also received a letter from Bristol, which stated that the Collector of the Customs had demanded the new duty on wine at that port. The persons from whom he had received this information were all equally unknown to him; but if the facts were as they had been stated, they certainly deserved the consideration of the House. To permit such proceedings, was certainly giving too great a latitude to the Executive Government, though he knew that the authority of that House had of late been thought very lightly of, and in some cases had been dispensed with altogether. He trusted, however, that the House would not suffer a bill to operate, to which they had not yet given their consent.

Mr. ROSE had no knowledge of the facts stated by the honourable gentleman, but he was certain that nothing of the kind had

been done by any order from the Treasury. If the honourable gentleman would not take his word for it, he might have, by moving for them, copies of all the orders issued relative to that object. That the revenue officers might have mistaken their duty was not impossible, and the circumstances, if they had really happened, must have originated in a mistake.

Mr. GREY had no objection to take the honourable gentleman's word for what he had stated; but he hoped orders would be issued to prevent such transactions from taking place in future. That House, which was jealous of any infringement of its privileges, even with respect to a turnpike-bill, surely would not suffer this, which was not only a violation of its own authority, but a direct invasion of the rights of the people.

Mr. Chancellor PITT complained of the *high tone* in which he said the honourable gentleman had directed an attack against the Executive Government, without any evidence that they had the smallest knowledge of the transaction to which he alluded.

Mr. GREY remarked, that if the honourable gentleman chose to call every thing which might happen to be unpleasant to him an attack upon Government, he had better say so at once, and procure a vote of the House, that no such thing should be done in future.

General SMITH thought, that if any revenue officers had acted in the manner stated, they ought, at least, to be censured by their superiors. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had attended to the very candid manner in which the honourable gentleman had mentioned the business, he would not have answered him with so much acrimony.

Mr. SHERIDAN wondered at the Chancellor of the Exchequer taking umbrage at his honourable friend's high and lofty tones, as he was perfectly competent to answer him in the same way; but he supposed the Chancellor of the Exchequer had got a patent of monopoly for high and lofty tones, and conceived any person making use of them, besides himself, guilty of an infringement upon his exclusive right. Mr. Sheridan strongly reprobated the procedure of which his honourable friend had complained. He had no doubt of the facts; he had received information from Norwich of a similar circumstance. It was evident it could not be done without the order or connivance of Ministers. It was not the first time such complaints had been made. If the revenue officers had been reprimanded, they would not have given cause for a second complaint: the circumstance of not receiving any intimation from their superiors to desist, was evidently a sanction for the repetition of their unjustifiable conduct, and the blame of the transaction attached to

Ministers, and no where else. Mr. Sheridan adverted to a charge that had been brought against him, of wishing to extend the excise laws; he believed he was one of the last men against whom such a charge could with truth be alleged. He had stated it as his opinion, that the bill in question should have contained a clause, by which the stock of private gentlemen should be taken and made liable to the tax; and he was still of the same mind. He thought it peculiarly hard that the man of property, whose fortune enabled him to lay in a large stock, should have it in his power to drink wine at a rate infinitely cheaper than what the needy man could, who only purchased a sufficient quantity for temporary consumption. As to the difficulty which was urged with respect to taking the stock of private individuals, he conceived none existed. Was it not in every respect as easy to make a private gentleman give in a return of the quantity of wine in his cellar, as to return how many servants he kept, and how many of them wore powder; in his opinion equally so: the objection was puerile. He said, he was still a foe to the extension of the excise laws; notwithstanding, he sincerely wished to see the excisemen entering the cellars of the Legislators themselves, as well as of every dealer, for the purpose of obliging them to pay the additional duty upon their stock in hand. Mr. Sheridan next made a few observations with respect to taxing the article of wine to such an extent as almost to amount to a prohibition from using it. Such a system would defeat its own end, as few, comparatively speaking, would drink wine at the advanced price. He said, when the bill went into the Committee, he should propose two amendments, one for taking the stock of private persons, and the other for inserting in the blank, for the commencement of the operation of the tax, "the 17th of July."

Mr. BUXTON said, he should be sorry to see the authority of excisemen extended to private houses.

Mr. Chancellor PITT denied that the additional tax would have the effect of a prohibition, and urged the impracticability of extending the tax to private individuals.

The bill was then committed, when Mr. Sheridan proposed his amendment—"That instead of the duties commencing on the 17th of April, they should commence on the 17th of July, 1796."

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the amendment would enable the wealthy merchant to procure a large stock, and sell at the advanced prices in the interval, to the loss of the revenue. The merchant could suffer no injury by the present bill, because it was proposed for him to pay the duty by instalments; so that, although his stock

might be kept a little longer upon hand, he would have an opportunity of disposing of the whole without loss or inconvenience.

Mr. SHERIDAN remarked, that the merchant might have had previous orders for which he could have no remedy.

The amendment was put and negatived, and the original resolution carried.

Mr. GREY gave notice, for to-morrow, of the motion which he was to have brought forward yesterday.

Mr. Fox's motion was put off till Tuesday.

Mr. DUNDAS said, that in consequence of the death of a person in the India department, he should be under the necessity of deferring his India Budget till to-morrow se'nnight.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR observed, that the complicated nature of the General Inclosure Bill rendered it necessary for him to require farther time to bring it forward. A matter of such important consequence to the country, he conceived, ought not to be hurried; he wished to delay it till the next session.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved that the real-succeſſion tax bill should be recommitted.

Mr. RASLEIGH said that this tax was liable to the same objections which he had urged against the personal succession tax bill. It paid no regard to the different values of the lives of persons on whom succession devolved. He thought that considerable difficulty would arise in levying the tax upon mines and fisheries, and upon the whole was decidedly against it, and therefore would move, that instead of "now" it should be recommitted for "this day three months."

Mr. FOX said, that this measure laboured under two objections—first, the novelty of the principle, as a tax upon capital; and secondly, the iniquity of the application. It was a system which, if acted upon in the extent to which the principle might be carried (and he admitted the present instance to be only a slight degree), would enable the State to seize upon the whole property of the country. Of all shades in which despotism had ever appeared in history, the most frightful was that under which the Sovereign became heir to the whole property of individuals, and were the principle of this measure once admitted, it was impossible to calculate how far it might be extended. From brothers and relations in a collateral line, it might in time reach to children, and from four or five per cent. the tax might be increased to ten or twelve. This was his principal objection to the bill.—He had another, however, grounded upon the particular hardship which would in certain cases attend its operations. In cases of marriage settlement, children were most frequently the objects for whom provision was made, but

sometimes collateral relations had an interest in the settlement. A case of that kind had come under his own experience. In case of the death of his nephew, Lord Holland, he was to succeed to the estates of his elder brother, by an article in the marriage settlement. As it happened, he had not given any consideration for the contingent benefit of this settlement. He might, however, have paid his brother some consideration for it, and in this case, were the tax to attach upon this property, the contract would be violated, because he would not receive it in the same circumstances in which it was when he concluded the bargain. On these grounds he seconded the amendment.

Mr. Chancellor PITT flattered himself that he would have no great difficulty in obviating the objections which had been stated against the bill. The principle had been already recognized in the personal-succession tax, and also in the duty formerly existing upon legacies. It had been urged that it would swallow up the whole landed capital of the country; but he contended, that it had no such tendency, and that it would have no such operation. This, like many other questions, was only a question of degree, and the objection, which in reality was very limited in its force, was stated as possessing unbounded weight. He had heard also that the tax might be paid several times over. This could not be done by the same persons; nor was it very likely that it could be done by the same estate, when the chances of direct succession were fairly calculated. But in no case was it a tax upon the capital, nor would it ever diminish the real value of the estate, because the tax was of such a nature that it could easily be paid by the occupier in the course of the four first years after his succession to it. It was therefore only a tax upon the landed income. As to affecting contracts formerly made, he was confident that it had no such tendency; and in the case particularly mentioned by the right honourable gentleman, in which he was personally concerned, the tax would not attach at all. For these reasons, he hoped the House would agree to the bill going into a Committee.

Mr. GREY insisted that the bill proposed a very partial and bad mode of levying a land tax. The right honourable gentleman had just now said, that it was not a tax upon the landed income. Why, then, did he not lay it directly upon the present possessors, and not upon posterity—a system of taxation which had contributed more than any other cause whatever to increase the national debt? Mr. Grey contended, however, that it was to all intents and purposes a tax upon the landed capital, and that it could not, in most instances, be paid by annual instalments, as had been represented. In this

opinion he was confirmed by the circumstance of the general want of money among landed proprietors, arising from burdens upon their estates, and large disbursements which they are often obliged to make, particularly in the first years after their succession, when this tax falls to be paid. He objected chiefly, however, to the principle of the bill, which he denied to have been sanctioned by the duties on legacies. A tax upon the capital of any country, could not fail to hurt its prosperity, and the discovery of the state of property, which the levying of the tax would necessarily require, would, in some cases, be found to be impossible, and in every case would prove to be vexatious and oppressive, while at the same time it was artfully calculated to increase the influence of Government over the country.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL confessed that this was an important subject, and attended with some difficulty, but he did not see that the objections applied to the principle at it was here carried into practice. This was not a tax upon capital. It was indeed a tax upon the produce of land, as many other taxes were circuitously taxes upon land, but it could not be called a land tax in the proper acceptation of the word. The discovery of the state of a man's affairs was not of the dangerous tendency, nor could be converted to the improper purposes alluded to, for it was no greater discovery, nor indeed to the same extent, as was made by the public registers of every county.

Mr. JEKYLL said, there certainly was some inconsistency in the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and those of his learned friend, for the one said that this was no tax upon land, the other confessed that in some measure it had that effect. This tax would operate as a tax upon land, and if the extraordinary expences of a ruinous war rendered it necessary to resort to new kinds of taxes, he should like to know whether the landed gentlemen would consent to a direct increase of the land tax. With regard to the discovery that would take place, it would evidently be attended with every circumstance of publicity. It was like sending commissioners of bankruptcy to solvent persons, and taking an account of all they were worth and all they owed. Monstrous expences required monstrous expedients to support them, and such was the nature of the resources to which the country was now driven.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY thought this tax very exceptionable. It was a direct tax upon capital in the degree, indeed, not very severe, but such as would very readily be increased, when it was thought convenient or necessary. In Holland, he believed, personal succession only was taxed, but at any rate it by no means



followed that such a mode of taxation should be adopted in this country, because it had prevailed in Holland, where the sources of revenue were exhausted, and the State felt the utmost difficulty in supporting the public expences. He thought this a worse measure, from the circumstance that it was to be paid in the four first years. It was levying in this time what might be put upon ten or twelve years, and, lest a man should die, making the most of him immediately. It had been justly said that in the first years of a succession, the greatest expence occurred, and that it was not very probable that the heir would, from his saving, be able to discharge the tax. It would be very hard on those who succeeded to small estates to pay the tax, much more than on great estates. It was the advantage of the taxes in this country that they were optional, or supposed to be so, and therefore sat more lightly. But here the hardship would be more felt, because it was a tax that the person subject to it was positively obliged to pay. Upon the whole he was against the bill, and concurred in the amendment.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL defended the bill, upon the same ground as the Attorney General, and stated that a tax of the same sort had been adopted by the French Government.

Mr. BASTARD said, that if there were no other way than by adopting this bill to avert a national bankruptcy, he might vote for it ; but not otherwise. He had heard gentlemen say, that the state of this country was such that they were under the necessity of voting for whatever taxes were proposed. But, while he found that a million was annually appropriated to the reduction of the national debt, we could not be said to be in a situation where we must vote for every tax that should be proposed ; and he felt the less reluctance in opposing the tax now proposed, as the personal-succession tax bill would answer for as much as was stated to be expected. If land was to be taxed, he would ask what part of land ? for, he remembered, that, within these ten years, within the walls of that House, a pledge was given to the public to bring the lands, woods, forests, &c. of the Crown to the public use, and yet, after that pledge of the House of Commons, these very lands and forests were the only ones that were exempted from the operation of this bill. He could not but lament that gentlemen had not properly stated the provisions of this bill, because he was persuaded they would then see that nothing could be done that would carry the purposes of the bill into effect in many instances, except the putting the lands that were the object of the tax to sale.—It had been said that this was a tax of despotism ; it was in a great measure so.—The Solicitor General had said, that a tax on the same princi-

ple as this had been adopted by the French Government. True, they did adopt a measure of this kind in the democracy of France, but what was the consequence? They pursued the consequence of it until they had got all the land into their own hands. He contended that the most manifest injustice would follow from this bill in the case of leasehold estates. If this bill should pass, the management of the land-tax must be put into other hands, for surely those who had its present management would give it up. Was any man in that House ready to say he would put an arbitrary fine on any man? This must be the case under this bill, for how was a person accurately to estimate the value of the interest which each person had in an estate which was the object of taxation? This would create ill blood and endless animosity all over the country. He had heard that a man might be beat into a physician, but he did not know how to make a commissioner in every case under this act a lawyer, and yet a lawyer he must be, and a good one too, else he would never understand how to act under this bill, for every man must be assessed according to his title. The difference between real and personal estates, as this bill was to operate, was very great. This bill would sink the value of all family estates, in which consideration the Constitution of this country was materially connected; for the Constitution of this country and the landed interest went hand in hand; if we destroyed the one we should destroy the other. Men's spirits would be broken by this bill; for men's spirits were broken by misfortune, and their independence was destroyed by necessity. This was the result of bad taxes. Men formerly of independence in the country, would be brought within the vortex of the metropolis, adopt its vices, and become the tools of Government for a livelihood, a practice now too prevalent, and which our ancestors regarded as the wages of corruption, and the grave of independence.

Lord SHEFFIELD said he was surprised to find the Attorney-General compare the register established in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and in Ireland, to the inquisition which would be established by the bill before the House. The register merely recorded the transfer of property, and the incumbrances of that property. The present bill was odious in the extreme by the inquiry it occasioned, as has been already ably stated. The tax imposed was partial—it was a severe land tax, having all the bad properties of that kind of tax, and it tended to beggar the peerage gradually, and to render it still more dependant. He thought other taxes much more proper might have been proposed. For example, a receipt stamp on the transfer of property in the funds.

Twenty pounds worth of land could not be transferred without paying several stamps, and he saw no reason why an half-crown stamp should not be paid on the transfer of one hundred pounds worth of stock. It was always very unpleasant to him to object to a tax, but he had flattered himself the tax now proposed would have been relinquished for one less odious.

General SMITH insisted, that the odious epithets which had been employed to brand the proceedings of the Convention of France, applied equally to the present measure. As the right honourable gentleman had thought its conduct worthy of imitation, he should not be surprised to see the lawyers at the other side of the House recommend the adoption of mandates.

Mr. Alderman NEWNHAM reprobated the present bill, which, with the tax on collateral successions, would be found so odious, that some future Administration would be obliged to submit to their repeal.

Mr. I. HAWKINS BROWNE defended the bill, which he insisted could not come under the denomination of an act to enforce an additional Land Tax. To the latter he had the strongest objection, as he was persuaded that it would be dangerous in the extreme, as it must lead to that equality which there was so much reason to dread. The House was called in justice to pass the present bill, as it had already passed the other; and for these reasons he would vote for the re-commitment.

The House divided on the re-commitment;

Ayes, 65—Noes, 24.—Majority 41.

The House, in a Committee, then went through the bill, which was reported, with several amendments.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that the report be now received, which was agreed to, and the report received accordingly. He then moved that the bill be re-printed, with the amendments, and re-considered on Monday, which, after a few objections from General Smith, was agreed to.

*Friday, 6th May.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS, after stating that several of the India papers now before the House were in some respects erroneous, moved for leave to withdraw them, and to substitute others in their place.—

Ordered.

He also moved, that a copy of a letter from Sir John Jarvis, dated the 8th of May, 1794;—and of a letter from Sir Charles Grey, dated the 20th of January 1794, be laid before the House.

Ordered.

Mr. LECHMERE observed, that the House was crowded in expectation of the motion of his honourable friend, (Mr. Grey). He could not, therefore, expect that much attention would be given to what he had to say. The object of the proposition which he had to make, was, however, of the first importance. It was the relief of the poor. But finding it impossible for him to call the attention of the House to it this evening, he would move, "That the Committee on the high price of corn be deferred to Wednesday next."—

Ordered.

Mr. SHERIDAN gave notice, that on Monday next he would move the House into a Committee on the wine-duty bill, as he intended to propose a method of levying the new duty on the wine in the cellars of gentlemen, without any extension of the authority of the Excise.

The House went into a Committee on the bill for continuing the reward for the discovery of the Longitude. Having filled up the blanks the House was resumed, and the report ordered to be received to-morrow.

General SMITH moved, "That there be laid before the House an account of all the corn and flour imported into this country during the month of April last, which was entitled to the bounty on importation, specifying the respective ports, and the names of the importers."

Mr. GREY said, that those who reflected upon the unexampled power which the present Ministers possessed, and the little disposition the House discovered to inquire into any part of their conduct; on the contrary, a disposition of the most unlimited confidence; it might appear a vain endeavour to bring against them any charge of mal-administration, especially such a one as would form the ground of articles of impeachment.—Aware as he was of these difficulties, and the little encouragement he had to submit to the House any propositions conveying a censure upon the conduct of Ministers, nay, despairing of that concurrence which would give it effect, he felt it his duty not to allow the House to separate, with little probability too of again meeting, without drawing their attention to a few plain intelligible points of the highest importance. He would call upon them to examine the public expences, he would demonstrate to them that Ministers had grossly misapplied the money of their constituents, and had been guilty of a flagrant violation of the laws of the land, to conceal which they had laid before the House an account of the distributions of the various

grants, which he would prove to be completely false. A minute attention to the public expenditure and accounts was the most important duty which the House could exercise. The power of the purse was the best security for the liberties of the people, and the House could not allow it to be encroached upon without betraying their most sacred trust, and renouncing their most valuable privilege. These principles he believed would not be disputed in argument, and surely the duty was rendered more important, and the necessity more urgent, by the magnitude of the expence which they had to superintend and to control. It would indeed be a melancholy consideration if, amidst all the influence by which they were overborne, the very magnitude of the public expence crippled the exertions of the constitutional guardians, and contributed to defeat and to disappoint all inquiry. If the House was aware of this, and was anxious to maintain the privileges they had received from their ancestors, they would, by a proper application of them, confirm the transmitted right, and deliver it intire to their posterity. He had heard gentlemen, on various occasions, particularly on the subject of the game laws, expressing a determined resolution to preserve that system for which their ancestors had fought and bled, and he hoped that the present object would be felt no less important, and the principle no less necessary. The points to which he was to direct the attention of the House were plain and simple. The House was called upon to pronounce whether they would admit in the Ministers of the Crown a power to dispense with the forms of the Constitution and the institutions of the law, or whether they would exercise their legitimate functions, and require such an application of the public money as the law prescribed, and such a faithful account as their honour and their duty ought to induce them to require. If they found the money of their constituents misapplied, would they suffer it to pass unnoticed? If they saw the law openly violated, would they insist upon no satisfaction? If they found the principles of the Constitution outraged, would they express no indignation and demand no atonement? The instances upon which he was particularly to dwell, were selected from a great many others which he might have taken up; but he had confined himself to these he should now bring forward, on account of their plainness and simplicity. They were such as all might understand, and the inferences from them were such as all who understood must acknowledge. He had not brought forward the incapacity Ministers had evinced, the failures they had incurred, nor the multiplied disasters, which, in the course of a ruinous war, had followed from their measures.—He would not comment

upon their gross mismanagement of the public money, where the application was within their discretion; but he would confine himself to three distinct charges:—1st, Their having misapplied the sums appropriated by act of parliament to particular services; 2dly, Their giving in a false account of the distribution of these sums; and lastly, Their having violated another act brought in since the right honourable gentleman had a seat in parliament, for regulating the office of Pay-Master General of the Forces.

He requested the House to attend, that there was an act passed every session after the grants for the use of the year were made, by which certain sums were appropriated to certain services, and which Ministers were prohibited to convert to any other purpose. With this solemn act of parliament, the House surely could not allow Ministers to dispense. The grants for the army, the ordnance, the clothing, the pay of general and staff officers, were subject to the distribution expressly provided in the act. By a paper upon the table, he would shew, that in reality the act had, in the instances enumerated, been disregarded, and that the sums were not applied to the purpose for which they were voted, and in the manner Parliament directed. By an account laid before the House on the 21st of April, it appeared that the money issued for the clothing of the army was not applied to that purpose, and that there was due to several colonels or commanding officers of His Majesty's forces the sum of 644,106l. 7s. 6d. for net off-reckonings and clothing for the years 1794 and 1795, and the sum of 146,900l. 12s. 4d. to general and staff officers, for 1793, 1794, and 1795, and the sum of 34,313l. 13s. 3d. to governors and lieutenant-governors for the years 1794 and 1795, though these sums were strictly appropriated by act of parliament. It also appeared from the account alluded to, that the sum of 31,056l. 3d. due to the general and staff officers of His Majesty's forces, for the year 1794, was paid out of the grants made for the year 1796. There was the act of appropriation, strictly regulating the distribution of these sums, and here was the account, shewing that the money was not applied to its proper purpose, nor was any account whatever given of the manner in which it was applied. He did not think it would be very easy for Ministers to make a defence against a charge so clear, and resting on foundations so indisputable. For their conduct in violating the law of the land in so notorious a manner, he did not think they could plead either convenience or necessity; because, if necessity had forced them to such a measure, it was their duty to have come and craved a bill of indemnity for the violation of the law in an instance which necessity demanded. Then, however,

the law would have been vindicated, and the Constitution saved from those new principles which threaten to overthrow it; and Ministers, had their conduct been pure and honest, would have experienced that indulgence which, on such occasions, the House was accustomed to bestow. Instead of candidly acknowledging that they had departed from the form prescribed by the law, they aggravated the guilt of that violation, by producing a false account of the distribution of these sums, and by endeavouring to mislead the House of Commons and to conceal their own misconduct. It might be urged in defence, that all former administrations had followed the practice, and that they were justified by uniform precedent. That the pernicious practice of extending the public expence beyond the sums voted upon estimate, had sometimes prevailed, was true, but not without the reprobation of Parliament. In the year 1711, by a resolution of the House of Commons, the practice was reprobated as an invasion of the rights of the House, and as a measure highly unconstitutional, and any misapplication of appropriated sums was stated to be a high breach of the privileges of the Commons. It was said, however, that extraordinaries were unavoidable; but if the proposition was to be admitted, it was to be qualified by the degree in which they were really necessary. When a fair account of past expences was stated, and a tolerable estimate formed of future services, the necessity of extraordinaries would in a great measure be superseded. He would ask, whether the Minister, to whom the House was so unboundedly liberal in granting supplies, with a vote of credit to the amount of 2,500,000*l.* might not have made such an estimate of the demands of the public service, as would have left little to be answered by extraordinary expences? The sum required for extraordinaries was not only in itself necessarily limited by the degree in which good management and prudent foresight would require it, but also by the precedents of former times. In the reign of Queen Anne, when the army was conducted by a person not much distinguished for economy, and with a continental war very wide and expensive, the extraordinaries scarce exceeded the sum of 200,000*l.*; then had not the practice of extravagant charges on the head of extraordinaries been extended of late without consent of Parliament? A person of high credit (Mr. Hatfield) coolly reflecting upon the subject in his closet, says, in his book of Precedents, that during the American war nothing could exceed the negligence of the House in not limiting the sums charged under the head of extraordinaries. Yet, however respectable this authority might be, he would produce still higher, that of the Report of the Committees of the House appointed to investigate the public ac-



counts. In 1782, the Committee stated the sums for extraordinaries as extravagant beyond necessity; and comparing the different circumstances of both periods, there was nothing in the present that could require a higher sum for extraordinary services. But the practice of charging extravagant sums on this head was arraigned by the honourable gentleman himself, at the end of the American war, with the utmost severity; yet now his adherents were forced to defend him upon those precedents which he had so vehemently reprobated, the extravagance of which had been so far surpassed during his administration. A defence like this, however, would little avail with the House:—a Minister who was ushered into the conduct of public affairs as the hope of the nation—as the reformer of abuses—as the declared foe of the system to which he succeeded!—But, it was said, that money must sometimes be taken from the estimated services, to be applied to urgent services. This justification, however, only amounted to this—that when money was so diverted, it was necessary to come forward and apply, to the arrears so incurred, the extraordinaries of the next year. But, in the present instance, the original deviation from the rule had not been atoned for even in this manner; for, it appeared from the account on the table, that great sums were still due to general and staff officers and governors of garrisons, for the year 1794.—Upon the principle of the justification pleaded, these sums should have been defrayed by the extraordinaries of next year. It was to be seen likewise, whether the same thing had not occurred in the year 1795. By papers upon the table it appeared, that up to the 21st of April, 1796, for the quarter preceding, eight millions of the grants of the current year had been expended; and still these arrears remained due up to the present period.

There could be no justification of the violation of the law of which Ministers had been guilty, but the most imperious public necessity; and, in that case, they should have atoned for the illegality of their conduct by putting themselves on the candour of the House, and seeking a bill of indemnity. As, therefore, the defence of Ministers for the misapplication of the sums appropriated by act of parliament was not valid, upon their own principles, he would, on this head, submit to the House the following resolutions:

Resolved I. That at all times, and under all circumstances, it is the indispensable duty of the House of Commons vigilantly to superintend the expenditure of the public money, and strictly to inquire into the application of the grants made by Parliament to the service for which they have been voted.

Resolved II. That by an act passed in every session of parliament, the particular sums granted for each particular service are specified, and the

money that shall be paid into the Exchequer is appropriated to their discharge; and that it is strictly directed that such aids and supplies shall not be applied to any use, intent, or purpose whatever, other than the uses and purposes mentioned in the said act.

Resolved III. That it appears from an account presented to this House on the 21st of April, 1796, that the sum of 644,106l. 7s. 9d. was then due to the several colonels or commanding officers of His Majesty's forces, for net off-reckonings and clothing for the years 1794 and 1795, although, by acts passed in 1794 and 1795, money was granted to discharge the same; and although the said acts direct that the money so granted shall be applied in discharge of the same, and not otherwise.

Resolved IV. That it appears from an account presented to this House on the 21st of April, 1796, that the sum of 146,900l. 12s. 4d. is now due to the general and staff officers of His Majesty's forces for the years 1793, 1794, and 1795, although, by acts passed in the said years, money was granted for payment of the said sum; and although the said acts direct that the said money so granted shall be applied in discharge of the said sum, and not otherwise.

Resolved V. That it appears from an account presented to this House on the 21st of April, 1796, that the sum of 34,313l. 13s. 3d. is now due to the several governors, lieutenant-governors, and other officers of His Majesty's forces and garrisons, in Great Britain and parts beyond seas, for the years 1794 and 1795, although, by acts passed in the said years, money was granted for discharging the said sum; and although the said acts direct that the money so granted shall be applied in discharging of the same, and not otherwise.

Resolved VI. That it appears from an account presented to the House on the 21st of April, 1796, that the sum of 31,056l. 3d. due to the general and staff officers of His Majesty's forces, for the year 1794, was paid out of grants for the year 1796, although, by an act passed in 1794, money was granted for discharging the said sum; and although the said act directs that the said money so granted shall be applied in discharging the same, and not otherwise.

The next part of the resolutions regarded the application of the sums granted for the service of the year 1796, to the arrears of services in 1794 and 1795. A resolution was passed in the year 1784, which he wished to be read at the end of his speech, but at present he would state the substance of it:—Left a dissolution of Parliament, which was expected, should take place before the Act of Appropriation was passed, the House resolved, that any Minister misapplying the funds, at that time granted, should be guilty of a high misdemeanor. This resolution was consistent with the true principles of the Constitution. The application of the grants of 1796 to retrospective services was an evident violation of the spirit of the House in voting the supplies, and fell under the resolution of the House of Commons, which he had already referred to, and the original fault of which they had been guilty, Ministers had followed up with a still farther violation of the law. He would therefore, upon this point, move this resolution:

Resolved VII. That it appears from an account produced to this House on the 21st of April, 1796, that the sum of 172,100*l.* due for off-reckonings, to the 24th of December, 1794, and which remained due on the 21st of January, 1796, was discharged out of the vote of credit granted for the express purpose of defraying expences that may occur in 1796. By an act passed in 1794, money was granted for discharging the said sum; and although the said act directs that the money so granted shall be applied in discharge of the same, and not otherwise.

But there had been other acts, besides those mentioned, equally violated. In 1782, in compliance with many petitions for Reform, a design of Reform was taken up, he hoped not merely to amuse the country, but a serious plan of reform was suggested, especially in the public offices; for this purpose an act was passed for regulating the office of Pay-master General of the forces, which, being found inefficient from some defect in its construction, was repealed, and a new one for the same purpose, and on the same principle, was passed under the administration of the right honourable gentleman himself. This act was intended both to remedy the evils arising from balances remaining in the hands of the Pay-master General, and to secure the regular payment of the army; and this too had been openly violated. In the first account of the application of the vote of credit of 1796, to which he requested the particular attention of the House, the sum of 430,000*l.* had been issued to the Pay-master General, of which a balance of 83,300*l.* was still in his hands. The House had been informed, on a former occasion, that this money, though stated in the account, was in reality sent to the Bank, where the balance remained.—Being suspicious of the information which Ministers might think fit sometimes to give in that House, he had made inquiries of a person very well qualified to tell him, and he had discovered, that in reality the sum alluded to had been put into the hands of the Pay-master General himself, and with him the balance was lodged.—The provisions of the Bill were explicit, That all sums issued for the payment of the army should be sent to the Bank, and there paid by drafts from the Pay-master General, distinctly specifying the service in which it was incurred. This provision had not been complied with, for the money had been first issued into the hands of the Pay-master General himself, and with him the balance remained. Such was the fact. And as the conclusions were too obvious to require argument, there he would leave it for the determination of the House. With regard to the accumulation of balance in the hands of the Pay-master General, the act provided that the sums appropriated to the clothing of the army should be issued periodically; yet it was proved, by the accounts on the table, that from Midsummer

1794, to December 1795, no money was issued for this service, and part of the arrears were discharged from the supplies of the current year. Whatever might be thought of the Minister's defence to his violation of the account of the Appropriation Act, here he would be forced to recur to a new ground of exculpation. Since it was passed, public affairs had been conducted by no other Minister ;—there was no example to plead in extenuation, no precedent to sanction this violation. Ministers had, in open defiance of the act, withheld the money from the service to which it was destined, and endeavoured to discharge the arrears by the supplies of the current year, without attempting to account for the application of the sum originally diverted. He would in consequence propose the following resolutions :

Resolved VIII. That it appears to this House, that by an act passed in the 23d year of His Majesty's reign, for the better regulation of the office of Pay-master General of His Majesty's forces, it is enacted, That no money for the service of the army shall be issued from His Majesty's Exchequer to the Pay-master General of His Majesty's forces, or shall be placed or directed to be placed in His Majesty's hands or possession ; but the same shall be issued and directed to be paid to the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, to be placed to his account.

Resolved IX. That it appears to this House, from an account produced on the 22d of April, 1796, that, in open contempt and defiance of the said act, the sum of 430,200*l.* has been issued directly to the Pay-master General of His Majesty's forces, in Exchequer bills, on the vote of credit for 1796 ; and that a balance of 83,300*l.* was remaining unissued in his hands on the said 22d of April, 1796.

Resolved X. That it farther appears to this House, that, by the said act, the Pay-master General of His Majesty's forces is directed and required to form his memorials and requisitions to the Treasury, and to issue his drafts upon the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, upon the 24th day of June and 24th day of December in every year, in equal payments, to such person or persons as have a regular assignment from the several colonels, lieutenant-colonels, commandants, majors, captains-commandant, and captains, for the monies appropriated for the clothing of the non-commissioned officers and private men of His Majesty's regular forces.

Resolved XI. That it appears to this House, that the sums of money appropriated for the clothing of His Majesty's regular forces, and which, according to the provisions of the said act, ought to have been issued on the 24th of December, 1794, the 24th of June and 24th of December, 1795, had been directed to other purposes, and still remained due on the 1st of January, 1796, in open contempt and defiance of the said act.

With regard to the disposition paper, which was the last topic on which he would touch, the practice of laying before the House such a document had originated in the extravagant reign of Charles II. and had been adopted and established at the revolution, when our liberties were asserted and vindicated, it was intended as a real account for the information of Parliament how the supplies were

employed. This paper, he now arraigned as completely false. It might be said by the Minister, that his predecessors had not been very careful to render this paper an exact account of the application of the public money. This was at all times a bad defence; but what was the House to think of the present Minister, resorting as a justification to precedents which he had been the foremost to condemn, and abuses which he had pledged himself to redress? The paper stated that the sums voted for the army, cloathing, staff, &c. had been issued and applied, when none had in reality been issued, and when that branch of the service was still in arrear. The House indeed might be told that this paper was merely a form; that it only contained an account of the sums issued from the Exchequer; and that under this form the Paymaster General received from the Treasury the sums required; but were they tamely to acquiesce in such a defence? would they permit the Minister to apply the public money as he thought proper, in defiance of solemn enactments of the Legislature, or that he should abolish the regulations which the wisdom of the Constitution had deemed necessary in order to maintain the vigour of its principles, and secure the purity of its administration? Instead of thus insulting the understanding of the House, instead of imposing upon them a false and fraudulent account, the Minister should have made atonement to the spirit of the Constitution, had necessity driven him from the strict line of conduct which it prescribed, and by a bill of indemnity satisfied the demands of its violated laws. He would therefore move his last resolutions—

Resolved XII. That it appears, that an account is annually presented to this House, shewing how the money granted for the service of the preceding year has been disposed of, distinguished under the several heads, and the parts remaining unsatisfied, with the deficiency thereupon.

Resolved XIII. That such account was intended to be, what in its title it professes to be, a real account, shewing how the money given for the service of the year had actually been disposed of, in order that the House of Commons might be informed of the state of the public expenditure, and satisfy themselves as to the application of the money voted to those services for which it had been granted by them.

Resolved XIV. That an account of the above description has been presented to this House in each of the years, 1794, 1795, and 1796, in which the money granted for the services of each year is stated to have been applied to the services for which it was voted by Parliament, although it now appears, from accounts since presented to this House, that the sums of 644,106l. granted for off-reckonings for the years 1794 and 1795; the sum of 146,900l. granted for the pay of the General and Staff Officers of His Majesty's forces for 1793, 1794, and 1795; the sum of 34,313l. granted for the pay of the several Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, and other Officers of His Majesty's forces in Great Britain and parts beyond seas, for the years 1794 and 1795, and severally stated to have been disposed of for those services, still remain unsatisfied.

Resolved XV. That, in the instances above mentioned, His Majesty's Ministers have been guilty of presenting false accounts, calculated to mislead the judgement of this House, of a flagrant violation of various acts of Parliament, and of a gross misapplication of the public money.

Here then he would at present leave the consideration of the subject. He had laid before the House an important case for their decision. They were now to determine whether they would enforce the acts of appropriation of the public revenue to its proper service, and preserve the spirit of their laws in the strictness of their application, or allow the dispensing power of a Minister to supersede the authority of the law, and the discretion of the Executive Power to supplant the wisdom of the Constitution.

The SPEAKER having read the first resolution;

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he felt a considerable degree of satisfaction at the resolutions which the honourable gentleman had then brought forward, and on which he had grounded specific charges against His Majesty's Ministers. He was happy at being afforded an opportunity of discussing regularly and precisely, certain topics which had been loosely thrown out at other times, when business of great importance pressed upon the attention of the House. However strong the points which the honourable gentleman had urged---however strong the case which he had put---he still hoped that he should prove to the satisfaction of the House, to the satisfaction of the honourable gentleman himself, and to that of his friends; that conceding to him as much as he should afterwards state of the principle, conceding also most of the facts---still he should be able to prove, that it would be impossible for him, or for the House to draw that conclusion, which he had then drawn, and which he had proposed to the House to draw, by his present resolutions; and what might seem, perhaps, a little singular, he contended, that even though the principle should be considered, *prima facie*, just, yet the House could not, with common justice, or with common fairness, vote the resolutions proposed. If the resolutions stated an indisputable truth, the question then would be, whether it were expedient to record that truth. The resolutions asserted that it was the duty of the House at all times, and under all circumstances, to inquire into the expenditure of the public money; so far he would subscribe to the principle; but when it was stated that it was its duty strictly to enforce the application of public money, according to the limits of the act of Appropriation, he maintained that the House could not censure Ministers from a retrospective view of that act, without doing the greatest act of injustice that ever was committed. Having premised so much, he would endeavour to follow the ho-

honourable gentleman's arrangement, and defend himself from the different charges in the order in which they were made. He allowed that the honourable gentleman had made his statements, generally, with great accuracy; he did not make an exception to the facts; he differed only as to the conclusions which he drew from them. With respect to the act of Appropriation, on which the honourable gentleman had dwelt, he agreed that it contained a very strong clause, which passed every year, and which enjoined, "that no money granted by Parliament should be applied to any other purpose than that for which it had been granted." He agreed that the act of Appropriation did apply, in binding and specific terms, to the regulation of the payment of navy and army services; of the navy, by stating its services under the head of a general fund; of the army, under various and distinct heads, "so much for guards and garrisons, so much for plantations, Chelsea, &c. &c." He admitted also, that His Majesty's Ministers, in the management and payment of army services, did not attend to the minute sub-divisions particularly mentioned in the act of Appropriation; they only generally took care, that no more should be issued for the army out of the supplies in the course of the year, than the total amount of the sum for which general credit had been given. That this was a deviation from the strict letter of that law he admitted; it was a deviation in the particular sub-divisions of army services. But gentlemen should recollect a fact, for which he contended, that that act had been precisely in the same form, in the last and present year, and in every year since he came into office, in which it had passed in the reign of George I. and in which it had continued down to the present day. They should recollect, that something of a similar nature, though not precisely the same, existed in the reign of King William; and that so early as the reign of Queen Anne, it was deviated from in as strong a degree, in regard to the principle, as during the present war. This had been mentioned by a very respectable authority, the Author of the Precedents of Parliament, and by him in a great measure justified, because the nation was then engaged in a war of great extent, with services in all parts of the globe; and it was impossible to foresee what might be the amount of all the various expences. The question then, which the House had to consider at present, was, whether it followed, from the particular breach of the act, which he had admitted to have taken place in certain instances; whether, in deviating from its express provisions to that extent, the present Ministers deserved the imputation of criminality which the honourable gentleman had stated; and whether their conduct called for and justified the censure of the



House? Undoubtedly, every deviation from an act of Parliament was *prima facie* criminal; but it did not follow that there was no excuse, palliation, or justification of that deviation from the law. It was, he said, an easy task to make a charge of the present nature. It was only necessary for a gentleman to call the attention of the House to the letter of the law, and when the deviation from it should be admitted, he might immediately proceed to condemnation; but surely the honourable gentleman would allow the persons charged to ask, whether the deviation were wanton, or arose from necessity? Secondly, if the deviation were new and unprecedented, or whether it were founded on ancient practice? Or thirdly, whether it were clandestine, or done with an intent to deceive the House; or whether it was brought under its notice, and sanctioned by its decisions? He would, he said, first consider the necessity of the case: he found it had been admitted, that some extraordinaries could not be avoided in time of war; the honourable gentleman had said, that the question was only as to the degree; but if there was ever a time when extraordinaries were allowable to a large extent, it must be in so extensive a war as the present. With respect to the comparative extent of the extraordinaries of the present war with those of former wars, that he said he would come to state afterwards; he did not find it necessary to mention it on the question of principle. But if it were allowed that extraordinaries were ever necessary, he would not wish for any other jury than the gentlemen of the opposition to judge him; nay, if the honourable gentleman who made the motion were called as a Jurymen, he should not challenge him. If extraordinary services were unavoidably necessary to be incurred in the course of a war, and such as from their nature could not be provided for, nor foreseen in their amount nor in their time; they must, when they were performed, be paid; how then was the money to be paid, but by withholding some of the payments of the services regularly estimated and voted for, which, according to the strict act of Appropriation, ought to have been applied to the particular services only for which they were voted? This was simply the whole of the case, as far as it related to the principle; and from the time of King William and Queen Anne, a full century, there had not been a year of war in which extraordinary expences had not been incurred, which had not been previously provided for by Parliament; nay more, for near half a century past, there had not been one year of peace in which extraordinaries had not been paid, and by that means the act of Appropriation violated. With respect, therefore, to principle and necessity, he had not much farther to urge; if it were possible to have only as small extraordinaries as those

of former times: if it were possible to have no extraordinaries at all, in time of peace, still it was impossible that a case could be put, in time of war, when the public service could be wisely or prudently conducted consistently with the strict letter of the act of Appropriation. If gentlemen would for a moment consider the uncertain events and operations of war, the different views of policy arising from circumstances daily changing in the course of a year; if they would consider that it might be sometimes necessary to maintain perhaps a large army on the continent, which before the end of the year it might be advisable to send to the immediate defence of our plantations; and if gentlemen would also consider that the same army in different situations was placed under separate and distinct heads of service, apportioned and limited in the Appropriation act, "so much for guards and garrisons, and so much for plantations;" under such circumstances, and with a comprehensive and just view of the subject, gentlemen must confess, that it would but ill accord with the public service to fetter the operations of the year to the strict letter of the act, passed at a time when, without the spirit of prophecy, it would be impossible to judge precisely of the proper limitations. It would be necessary then to increase the sum allotted for plantations; for if the soldiers were sent, they must be provided for and paid, and it was almost superfluous for him to ask the questions, could Ministers pay them without neglecting a literal adherence to the act of Appropriation? and would it be any thing short of necessity to the public service, that the act should be dispensed with? Thus, then, he had already stated the practice; he had said, that in years of peace, universally for half the present century, and in years of war, occasionally during the whole of the century, extraordinaries had been incurred. He was willing to allow that the practice existed formerly with respect to sums far short, but however, in sums not so small as the honourable gentleman stated, for, instead of 200,000*l.* which he had stated to be the utmost extent, he would find, that in the course of the war in the reign of Queen Anne, between 300,000*l.* and 400,000*l.* had been incurred in the article of extraordinaries of the army; but even taking it at the honourable gentleman's statement, it was sufficient to give him the benefit of pleading precedent in justification. In the war of 1740 and 1741, which terminated in the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, extraordinaries had been also incurred to a great amount. In the German war they had considerably increased; and in the American war, so recent in the recollection of this country, that line of service had increased to a much larger extent than it had ever done before. But although the sum of 300,000*l.* or 400,000*l.* may not, in a

comparative scale with the amount of the extraordinaries in the present war, appear large; yet if gentlemen would take into the account the comparative value of money in those times, when contrasted with its present value, the House would perceive that there was something more to be deduced than mere precedent, and that the present extraordinaries might be justified also by the comparative amount of those in the reign of Queen Anne. During the Administration of a man whom the honourable gentleman would certainly not object against, a man of public spirit and pure patriotism—during the Administration of Mr. Pelham—when the finances of the war were directed by a person who had been trained for other great, eminent, and important stations, who filled with honour, dignity, and respect the chair of Speaker of the House of Commons; it would be found that during his Administration, the expences were paid in a way different from that which was expressly mentioned in the act of Appropriation, and the Ministers of that day were equally justified by the necessity of the public service. But he did not wish to rest upon the silent acquiescence of Parliament in the practice of neglecting the letter of the act so often mentioned: there occurred a marked and particular instance in which he had the recorded judgment of Parliament on that subject. The Members of the Administration of that day had a vote of censure proposed against them for the payment of an extraordinary service, and the vote was proposed in terms not very different from the resolutions proposed by the honourable gentleman on the present day. On the 19th of March 1743, during the Administration of Lord Wilmington, notice was taken in the account of extraordinaries, of a sum to the amount of 40,000*l.* for the purpose of putting the Austrian troops in motion, under the command of the Duc d'Henberg. In the motion proposed to the House, it was stated as “a dangerous misapplication of the public money, and destructive of the rights of Parliament,” the merits of the motion were not then decided on, for the previous question was moved and carried on a division; but the papers were produced to prove the importance of the services performed; and on the 10th of April 1744, [Vide Debrett's Debates from 1743 to 1774, Vol. I. page 369.] the motion was again urged, and it was amended by leaving out the words before stated, “a dangerous misapplication,” &c. and inserting in their stead “necessary for putting the troops in motion, and of great consequence to the public service.” There was then a division on the vote of disapprobation, which was negatived—Ayes, 145—Noes, 259; and, what was rather whimsical, the father of the right ho-

nourable gentleman opposite him (Mr. Fox) was the teller for the votes. It so happened, that the practice at the present complained of, was a practice regularly stated—known to the House—recognized by the House—and made the foundation of the proceedings of the House for every year; the accounts of the extraordinaries of the army were presented, and every gentleman who voted for them, knew that the act of Appropriation of the year before must have been departed from in the payment of them. Would gentlemen pretend to say, or could they ever have imagined, that the extraordinary service could wait for payment until the subsequent session? Extraordinaries, which consisted of bills of exchange drawn from abroad, payable at a certain time at the expiration of which they must positively be discharged. If, therefore, for fifty or sixty years past there were extraordinaries incurred, and incurred contrary to the letter of the various acts of appropriation which had passed in that time; if the House of Commons had been so far a party to those transactions as to sanction them, by their votes, to make good the payment of these extraordinaries, from the accession of George I. to that day, would the honourable gentleman himself, if every other member in the House was to withdraw; and he was singly to decide upon the merits of the question, would he deal out justice to the Ministers of the present day, by condemning them for doing that which Parliament had constantly and repeatedly done? Would he censure Ministers, and not Parliament? Would he, instead of placing the charge upon the House; lay it on those, who being persuaded, from the practice of Parliament, that they were justified in their act, merely carried measures into execution which were repeatedly recognized by the Legislature? It might be pretended, that formerly Parliament gave only a kind of negative assent; but when the honourable gentleman considered the report of 1782, made by the Committee, which stated the practice of extraordinaries as a grievance to the House, from the time of that report, he had a right to state, that the House had not then tacitly and indirectly, but directly and expressly by every vote of extraordinaries from that time, recognized the principle of that head of public expenditure. It had also been the practice of individuals connected with the honourable gentleman (certainly there was an exception in respect to the honourable gentleman himself, who had not found it necessary as yet to state to the House, what he should think it necessary to propose in laying on the public burdens, and in regulating the expenditure of the different services.) A right honourable gentleman near him (Mr. Fox), who had once been in office, and now made one of that formidable opposition ranged over against him, knew some-

thing of the practice of extraordinaries; he did not mean to state that the right honourable gentleman had a situation which made him particularly responsible in the question of finance; but as in the present motion the honourable gentleman thought fit to shift the charge off his shoulders as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to place it conjointly on him and his colleagues in office, so the practice of extraordinaries, on the same principle, would form a charge against that right honourable gentleman whilst in administration, though he was not Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the general words of the present motion, he said there was an excess of candour for which the honourable gentleman was entitled to his sincere thanks, as it gave him a right to bring the right honourable gentleman, not as his judge, but as a witness to bear testimony on his behalf, to prove that in the year 1782, and a great part of the year 1783, when the two persons were Paymasters-General who brought in the act relating to the pay-office, there were extraordinaries to the amount of many millions voted and paid. Thus had he a living witness of the practice in the person of his opponents. But he had one witness more singular than all the rest—not a living, speaking authority, but a dumb—a dead one—the authority he meant was the act of Appropriation itself, upon the letter of which the gentleman sought for his condemnation. Part of this act was, to make good several millions of extraordinaries. The act of Appropriation contained, he said, in the body of it, a sum to make good deficiencies arising from the payment of extraordinaries, and therefore that act of Parliament which recorded in itself the annual breach of its own provisions, afforded also a vindication of that practice which was that night stated as a crime in His Majesty's Ministers. Mr. Pitt said, he had not yet quite done with acts of Parliament on that question: he would recite in his vindication the pay-office act, which was brought in by Mr. Burke after the Report of the Committee in 1782, and which act was afterwards amended by Colonel Barre. The Report had stated that the practice of incurring army extraordinaries ought to be in future abolished; and the act of Parliament stated the precise time, and the form accordingly, in which the Paymaster-General was to keep an account of the extraordinary expences not provided for by Parliament. Thus had he stated the second act of Parliament, which proved on the face of it, that there had been extraordinaries. How then did the question stand? He had proved it to be the practice for above a century, of Ministers, living and dead; and recognised by the act on which the charge was founded. There was one circumstance which still remained to be stated—he must be allowed to refer once more to an authority,

the same work which he had mentioned before—he meant that on the precedents of Parliament, which had certainly urged, in very strong terms, the objection to the amount and principle of extraordinaries. In this work was to be found the following passage: “In the commencement of the session, in December 1782, it being doubtful whether the war would continue, the Ministers did not bring in the army estimates before the recess at Christmas.—The navy only was intended to be voted, and the land and malt taxes to supply the service. But it being found that all the money voted in the former session, upon the army account, had been issued, and that a farther sum would be necessary for the pay and subsistence of the land forces before the House of Commons met again in January, it was, upon mature consideration and consultation with the different officers of the Treasury and the Exchequer, judged necessary that a sum should be voted upon the army account, in order to give the Paymaster of the army a credit with the Exchequer; and upon this ground the Secretary at War delivered in a short account of two months extraordinaries, which were afterwards voted, to entitle the Paymaster, during the recess, to receive that sum at the Exchequer, upon the account of the army.” *Hatsell’s Precedents*, Vol. 3, page 152, &c. Having read this passage, he wished, he said, that the House would take into their view that uniformly received practice, established by, and arising from, a series of transactions similar. That they would consider that the material part of the act of Appropriation referred to the extent of the credit given generally for the army, rather than to the particular sub-divisions of the army service in its separate heads. Although he admitted that the best and undeniable defence, was the necessity of the case, yet there were different ways in which the practice of extraordinaries had been recognized. During the first seven years after his administration commenced, there was no subject in that House which brought on more hostile debate than the finances; they were discussed on the side of those who first attacked his opinions, with great vigilance and perseverance. In the years 1786 and 1791\* particularly, debates arose on the peace expenditure, and so far was Parliament from shutting its eyes to the extraordinaries of the army, that in each of the Committees of those times, there was to be found an estimate of their probable amount; they were calculated by one Committee to amount to 260,000*l.*; and by another, to 280,000*l.* arising out of the extraordinaries, and not provided for by Parliament: nor was there one word against the principle of

\* Vide *Debrett’s Parliamentary Register* for 1786 and 1791.

those extraordinaries ever stated in any one of the debates to which he alluded. Indeed the Committee of 1782 did not propose to abolish the principle of extraordinaries, but it recognized it by proposing to limit it as well as it could. It recommended in the Report, that the House should endeavour, with as much accuracy as possible, to have an estimate of probable extraordinaries, and to regulate the drafts of Governors abroad, and particularly the bills of exchange, which, as he had stated before, formed a great article of extraordinaries; but still it would be impossible to provide for every particular case. Ministers were only capable of checking these drafts and bills by general regulations; and he would undertake to say, that during the present war, every practicable general regulation had been established to submit bills of exchange to as many checks as possible. Mr. Grenville had formerly given instructions to the Governors and Commanders abroad to bring them under as strict examination as possible, but no estimate was given in by him of probable extraordinaries. But the present Administration went farther, for they not only adopted the beneficial regulations of Mr. Grenville, but as much as possible complied with the substance of the other measure recommended by Colonel Barre: For he (Mr. Pitt) had in the large votes of credit, stated the amount of probable extraordinaries. He confessed, that in making such estimates, every gentleman was liable to be mistaken in his views and calculations, nay, he was sorry to find in a recent instance, that he had met in that respect with a considerable disappointment; however, from the nature of the thing, that must unavoidably be the consequence when men endeavoured to make provision beforehand for the extraordinaries to be incurred. He had heard it stated, as one of the articles of charge against him, that he had thought proper constantly to propose a vote of credit to a greater amount than had been hitherto voted by Parliament; but what was that but a compliance with the regulations proposed by Colonel Barre to endeavour, in proportion as there was foreseen a necessity for extraordinaries to a large amount, to estimate this probable amount? He found it necessary to make one observation respecting the bills of exchange which he had before mentioned. Gentlemen must see that they were influenced entirely by the local regulations of the various places they were drawn at, and that he was not able therefore to estimate them with precision. The charge therefore of not proposing full estimates, amounted only to the charge of having failed where no man in his senses could pretend to be accurate. One principal cause of inaccuracy arose from the high price of provisions; which proved two things,—first, that the expences were necessarily higher than



in any former war to the same extent ; and secondly, that it was impossible to foresee the evil, so as to give a correct estimate to the public. The only thing then that remained, was to diminish the extraordinaries as far as could be done, by a moderate probable computation, and keep nothing wilfully back from the public. As a proof that he had done so, he appealed to the votes of credit which he had pushed to an extent unexampled in any other Administration. He had endeavoured to provide for such parts of the expenditure as had been foreseen. The only way in which he could have prevented any probability of deficiency, would be, if the House had thought proper to grant a vote of credit so much beyond the amount of probable extraordinaries, as to take care that the provision must be beyond the service, and not to leave it possible for the service to exceed the provision. But what would be the wisdom and policy of such a measure ? If he had gone to the outside of a probable estimate, there would be provided a dead fund, manifestly to the injury of the public. Mr. Pitt said, that whilst he appealed to the practice of his predecessors, as a justification for incurring extraordinaries, he did not mean to deny that they had greatly exceeded their estimate ; he allowed, that partly from a fluctuation in the prices of various articles, partly from the impossibility of foreseeing many expences which he afterwards found it necessary to incur, and partly, he was ready to allow, from the errors of his calculation, there were left above the estimate large and heavy extraordinaries, and he not only felt it himself as disappointment, but it might also be stated as matter of disappointment to the House and to the public. He next came to the comparison of the amount of the extraordinaries unprovided for by Parliament, as incurred in the present war and in the American war. The honourable gentleman had declared them to be greater than those of any other war that was ever known. Certainly the votes of credit must be deducted from the extraordinaries in the present war, because they were foreseen and provided for ; that formed a great deduction. The taxes were also funded beforehand for the loan of Exchequer bills. There was another sum to be deducted : In the calculation of the peace establishment by the Committee, he had already mentioned that 280,000*l.* was the sum named as the probable extraordinaries ; that sum, he contended, was foreseen also by Parliament, and he had a right to deduct so much yearly during the war. If, therefore, subject to all those deductions, the extraordinaries were calculated fairly, they would amount to the sum of 4,600,000*l.* only during the present war ; and as all the extraordinaries of the American war were wholly incurred without the pre-

vious consent of Parliament, they might be stated to amount to 9,100,000*l.* exclusive of the votes of credit, for there were some votes of credit, though he did not reckon their amount. There was therefore a balance in favour of the present war and against the American war, of 5,500,000*l.* incurred in extraordinaries. This was a statement which he had a right to make, when he was charged with incurring an enormous sum in extraordinaries beyond the example of all former wars, without the consent of Parliament. Having taken leave of the extraordinaries of the army, he would make a few short comparisons in the other services. In the course of the present contest, it had been his practice to anticipate as much as possible all the services to their full amount. During the years of the American war, there were in navy and ordnance bills, 12,000,000*l.* incurred without the authority of Parliament; and not only incurred without the previous consent of Parliament, but not made good at the end of each year; whereas the practice had been, in the present war, to anticipate as much of the expences as possible, or to make them good at the end of the year, and not to leave them as a total deficiency at the end of the war. The total amount of the deficiency of the navy and army, and of the unprovided of the ordnance, amounted in the three years of the present war to 16 or 17,000,000*;* and in the American war, the deficiencies of these three services amounted to the enormous sum of 23,000,000*l.* and yet he had heard it stated, that he had gone beyond all former times in the extraordinaries. He had, he said, shewn that he had endeavoured to prevent extraordinaries from being incurred, and had provided for those which it had been possible to estimate; he had also stated, that the high price of provisions was one cause, among others, of his not being able to foresee all the extraordinaries; and he did not find it necessary to say more upon that part of the subject. He trusted he had fully proved to the complete satisfaction of the House, that the extraordinaries could not have been defrayed by any other means than those to which it had been found necessary to have recourse. He viewed the army money in the light of a current fund; and it could not be controverted, that the demands of the current year were to be provided for in proportion as the sum for extraordinaries came into the Exchequer, and therefore he conceived, that no deviation from the principle could be implied in any instance which the honourable gentleman had mentioned, farther than what the constant practice warranted.

He next came to consider the Act for the regulation of the Pay-Officers, the violation of which had been so vehemently urged;

the spirit of that act related to the issuing of bills by the Paymaster-General, and which the honourable gentleman contended should be issued by the Bank of England : when the honourable gentleman talked of the information which he declared he had received on the subject, he certainly could not have understood the nature of that information, or if he had, he certainly did not reason on it in a just and conclusive manner. The fact was, that the warrant was strictly conformable to the letter and spirit of the act of Parliament. The Bank was to keep open a cash account under the direction of the Paymaster-General, and it was generally understood, that the Bank would never charge themselves with any thing but cash. In consequence of that idea, when the Exchequer Bills were issued by warrant, and came into the Bank, they sent one of their officers to acquaint the Paymaster, that they could not, according to their system, receive them as cash. The bills were, therefore, disposed of by the Paymaster-General, not for the purposes of profit, but merely as a matter of necessity. Some time after his honourable friend near him (Mr. Steele) proposed to the Bank an arrangement by which the Bank were to take the bills as cash : To that arrangement the Bank had acceded. Such was the exact state of the transaction, on which so much censure had been lavished, and he should leave to the candour of the House to decide, with what justice any blame could attach to a measure completely unforeseen and unavoidable. There had been in no point of view the slightest deviation from the meaning of the act, and the vigilance of the Paymaster was intitled to considerable praise. He next came to another charge contained in the resolutions of the honourable gentleman, which went to criminate His Majesty's Ministers for deviating from the letter of the Act ; but if he were to be condemned by the letter of the act, he was perfectly warranted in saying, that it could not in the least apply to him. There was not one word to be found in it, which directed that the payments should be made on a particular day, therefore any deviation from the strict letter could not be inferred—[Mr. Grey here by a gesture expressed his dissent]—The honourable gentleman, continued Mr. Pitt, seems to be shocked at the argument which I have just used, and appears to think that the equity of the act should be alone considered. Thus when he finds he can no longer maintain his propositions on the letter of the act, which he now considers as a ground no longer tenable, he has recourse to the equity of it ; and yet the honourable gentleman denies me the use of the spirit or the letter, just as it suits his own occasion." [A cry of Hear! Hear!] Mr. Pitt declared, that he only made use

of this mode of reasoning to shew the fallacy of the honourable gentleman's arguments ; but he did not mean to press it, or take any advantage of the weakness of them. He should therefore direct his observations to an occurrence of a more material nature. The Act of Parliament certainly directed the Paymaster-General to make out his memorials in the names of the persons who were interested in them : and in answer to the charge of the day, of payment being omitted, as specified by the act, he should only remark, that the Paymaster had no knowledge of the persons interested ; it was consequently evident, that the memorials could not have been made out exactly against the day of payment, as the names of the parties were not ascertained. He would therefore submit to the judgement of the House, whether the Paymaster was not under such strong and positive circumstances, at least excusable, with respect to the spirit of the act. But the honourable gentleman had in the next place proceeded to another objection, that when the memorials were presented for payment, the Treasury had not, according to the direction of the statute, complied with the demand of the parties interested. To that, he trusted, he could give an answer, which even to the honourable gentleman himself would appear satisfactory. He grounded it on the plea of necessity : for at the time when the memorials were presented for payment, there was no money in the Treasury. But perhaps the honourable gentleman would not be satisfied with that answer, which might impress conviction on the most stubborn mind ; and ask why the Treasury had not provided the proper sums of money to answer demands which they know were to be made on them ? He should answer that question, by pleading the statements which he had formerly made on the same subject, and he should take the liberty of adverting to them once more : The extraordinaries were, it could not be denied, of such a nature, that it could not be foreseen to what sum they might exactly amount ; if they consequently exceeded any sum at which they had been previously calculated, they could not be otherwise provided for than by taking from the establishment those sums which were necessary for defraying them. He was justified in stating these considerations even in a stronger manner, for the extraordinaries were not only unforeseen, nor could the precise time of their payment be ascertained, but it was absolutely necessary that they should be discharged precisely on the day when the bills of exchange drawn for that purpose became due. How then was it possible to make that punctual provision, the want of which had been so much censured, for sums which could not be previously ascertained, and at a time which could not be

exactly foreseen, without taking from the establishment, or the money voted on estimate, those sums which it became indispensably requisite to apply to that purpose? The subsistence money had been regularly issued on the 24th of each month; the half-pay had been attended to, as well as all articles of a compassionate sort, and every claim which related to arrears in general. Whether the deficiency which took place in the establishment, occasioned by the necessity of providing for extraordinaries, should have fallen on the half-pay, Chelsea or the Staff-officers, was the question which appeared peculiarly intitled to consideration. It seemed but fair and just that if any class of men were compelled to suffer any temporary inconvenience, from the unavoidable excess of extraordinaries, and which of course diminished the sums voted on estimate for the year, it should be that class which were from their peculiar situation best able to support it. Nor could there be any doubt in considering the situation of the officers on half-pay, Chelsea Hospital, and the Staff-officers, which ought to be paid, and from which payment ought in such a case to be withheld. It could not be supposed, that officers on the staff were in the same want of those sums which were absolutely necessary to the maintenance of the other classes. When therefore the money voted for the service of the Staff was withheld, it was done from the fairest and most equitable principles, and could not be productive of any essential distress. But the honourable gentleman contended, why was not an equal provision made for all the branches of service, and why were they not all paid alike? Was it not sufficient to say, that it was impossible to provide for extraordinaries which could not be foreseen, and the amount of which it was impossible to ascertain? He would go farther and state, that it was impossible to ascertain or meet the public expences by Ways and Means, however large, for it was out of the power and judgement of the House to form an exact opinion of what their amount might be. It could not be justly said in what state the consolidated fund would be, what sums the Bank of England might agree to advance for the exigencies of the public, what the Loan would produce. If therefore all these important points could not be known to the House, as well as the exact time at which they were to operate, was it any reproach to the Treasury, that they were not able to foresee impossibilities, or ascertain Ways and Means which, in their nature, were unascertainable? It should also be considered, that the extraordinaries were indispensable branches of the public service, which could not be carried on without the most rigid punctuality in the mode of payment. The honourable gentleman had,

in the course of his speech, touched on one head, though he had not thought proper to ground any charge on it. He should therefore say a few words on the subject of that head, which related to the application of the vote of credit to past services, and which the honourable gentleman considered as a proceeding by which His Majesty's Ministers subjected themselves to blame. He would, in direct opposition to the honourable gentleman, maintain, that the application of the vote of credit to past services, was not only proper, but just and necessary. Did the honourable gentleman mean to say, that the army money was not to be used for extraordinary, and did he propose to establish it as a true proposition, that the Exchequer Bills were to be disposed of, and paid at a great loss, for the purpose of coming within the Act of Parliament? If such was his meaning, the public would, by such a system, suffer in a most material way, for Government could not, according to that statement, dispose of money then in their hands for the payment of extraordinary, while to the vast prejudice of the public interest, they would be obliged to part with the Exchequer Bills at a considerable loss, and that to answer the very purpose for which they had already in their possession sufficient sums of money. Did the honourable gentleman call that measure economy? and was that conduct a part of his plan for public retrenchment? He next came to the charge of falsehood in the disposition paper of the public money, which the honourable gentleman had so strongly urged. There had never been, he maintained, from the accession to the present moment, any disposition paper laid on the table of the House, which was not equally liable to the same charge as that brought forward by the honourable gentleman against the present disposition paper, of deceiving Parliament. In all that period the same kind of paper had been laid before the House of Commons, without any variation. Gentlemen would, therefore, judge with what justice, with what consistency the honourable gentleman could make a charge against Ministers of wishing to deceive Parliament; a charge which was merely grounded on the production of a paper which had, from the accession to the present moment, been furnished precisely in the same manner and form. The paper had been signed during the present reign by Mr. Spear, the Clerk of the Revenue, a gentleman of great respectability, and was laid on the table of the House as a matter of course;—and so little did he conceive it to be an object of any consequence, that he had not at any time mentioned a word on the subject matter of it to the gentleman whose business it was to sign it. If, therefore, the honourable gentleman considered the paper as liable to the im-

putation of falsehood, he trusted that the honourable gentleman's candour would acquit him (Mr. Pitt) of any share of that weighty charge. But the paper, unfortunately for the honourable gentleman, happened to form a principal foundation of his charges. It appeared to involve a subject of great and mighty concern; it had, no doubt, been read by some of the most attentive Members in the House; but it was equally true, that it had been also read by some of the most inattentive; he was persuaded he could prove, that the honourable gentleman had not, with all that attention for which he was distinguished in financial considerations, read it himself. The honourable gentleman had set out with declaring, that the statements contained in the paper were fallacious, and calculated to mislead the judgement of Parliament; but it so happened, that there was not one word respecting any particular statement to be found in any part of it. That such was the case he would undertake to prove, even to the satisfaction of the honourable gentleman himself, who would therefore be obliged to abandon one of his principal, but ill-chosen, grounds of attack. The title of the disposition paper was in itself a refutation of what had been urged on the strength of it. It was an account of the sums of money expended for the public service in the year 1795, to March 1796, and was disposed under several heads. It was liable to be taken in two ways; the first was, with regard to the items respectively applied, and so the honourable gentleman took it.—But there was also another interpretation to which it was subject, and the honourable gentleman would find, that it contained a distinct statement of the various heads of service which usually occurred in public accounts, such as Navy, Ordnance, Land Forces, &c. &c. It was unquestionably true, that it took notice of every item of expence, and then drew out a total of the whole under the column of sums granted, and then gave separately the sums granted and the sums paid. But the honourable gentleman had not, with his usual acuteness, observed that it had only mentioned the items in general terms, for unhappily for that very material part of his charge, on which he so much relied, instead of any sums being annexed to the items, there were only to be found opposite to them perfect blanks. Such then was the ground on which the honourable gentleman had thought proper to bring part of his charge, and such was the history of that paper; a paper which had afforded such ill-founded comments; which had then been made out and laid on the table as a matter of course, and respecting which the same unvaried regulation had been followed for near a century. But if even the honourable gentleman had been



as successful as his wishes led him to think he would have been, in establishing the falsehood of the paper, it certainly could not have followed that he (Mr. Pitt) was implicated in the guilt.

He had now gone through the different heads of charge advanced by the honourable gentleman, and had given such answers as appeared to him decisive upon the subject.

He concluded by observing, that though he might not have much to expect from the candour of the honourable gentleman, he had every reliance on the candour and conviction of the House.

Mr. FOX. I know not what character the right honourable gentleman will be disposed to allow me for candour, but I have certainly listened with all that attention to the right honourable gentleman's speech, which the importance of the subject, and the interest which he must necessarily feel in the decision, have a right to claim. I acknowledge that it was a speech of very great ability, but it was that kind of ability in which there was a display of dexterity rather than any thing else; for I particularly remarked, that on those points which were acknowledged to be doubtful by my honourable friend, he dwelt the most, and that he insisted least upon those topics which were most strongly pressed by my honourable friend.—The greatest part of this speech went to prove what never had been doubted, and what my honourable friend never presumed to question, that army extraordinaries are a necessary evil; and if any person had heard the apology of the right honourable gentleman, without having previously heard the charge brought against him by my honourable friend, he would naturally have supposed that it contained an accusation of introducing an article of army extraordinaries into the public accounts, which never had found its way there before. We do not alledge this as an accusation; on the contrary, we consider them as a necessary and unavoidable evil. But, while we admit this, we cannot forget that they have, by Committees of the House of Commons, been termed unconstitutional, and described as an evil which, as much as possible, ought to be diminished.—The way in which the right honourable gentleman accounts for these extraordinaries is this: sometimes circumstances occur which render the expences of a particular head of service greater than was provided for in the estimate. It may happen that the service for which the estimate is found deficient, is of more importance than another service, the demands of which the estimate is fully sufficient to satisfy; and as the money must be raised, it is done most conveniently by borrowing for the extraordinary occurrence from the estimate for the next extraordinaries that are voted. This, it is true, cannot be done without a violation of the Appropriation Act; and

certainly he was justifiable in contending, that cases may occur, in which the provisions of this and every other act of Parliament may be departed from. In confirmation of his argument, he alluded to an instance which happened in 1793, in which the House of Commons decided, whether in that particular case Government deserved approbation or censure in violating that act, and in which it was decided that they had acted for the advantage of the country. It was worthy of observation, however, that there were 145 members who thought differently. He alluded to a relation of mine, who then voted in the majority, and I certainly, considering the circumstances as they then existed, would have voted in the same manner. But give me leave to remind that right honourable gentleman, that a relation of his (Lord Chatham) equally respectable with the person to whom he alluded, voted, on that occasion, in the minority.— If the question was, Whether or not a bill, drawn upon the Treasury, ought to have been paid? I would answer, that it ought.— But the question of present discussion is totally different. The extraordinaries of the army, recognized as they have been by the practice of Ministers and the votes of Parliament, were censured, in respect of their amount, during the American war, in the Report of the Committee in 1782, in terms similar to those which have been employed in the course of the present war. Though I was not the Financial Minister at the time, I certainly profess myself accountable for every thing that was done by every member of Administration. But supposing that we reprobated the extent to which extraordinary expences were incurred, and had actually devised a plan for annihilating the system, it was altogether impossible that in the course of a few months we could give it effect. But it is otherwise with the right honourable gentleman. Indignant as he professed to be at the amount of these extraordinaries, and violent as he was against the Administration which had carried them to such an extent, coming into power upon these principles, and presiding in the government of the country during seven years of peace, one would naturally have expected, that in this particular at least, there would have been some radical reform; instead of which the present Minister lays before Parliament accounts of extraordinary expences, which far exceed any that were ever incurred by his predecessors. In his statements, the right honourable gentleman entered very little into detail; but, notwithstanding what he asserted, I will contend that the extraordinaries of the present considerably exceed those of the American war, the amount of which he, in common with myself, so severely reprobated. I conceived, however, that he would not have recurred to the American war for the grounds of his de-

fence—a war which was marked, beyond all others, with extravagance, and the managers of which the right honourable gentleman himself used so often to reproach with the most careless neglect, and the most criminal prodigality of the public money. But I am sorry that he dwelt so long upon the extraordinaries of the army, as the subject was not materially connected with the present question.—His defence is this—unforeseen demands frequently arise, for which no estimate is made, but which must be paid. This can only be done by drawing upon the provision made for services foreseen, and which of course must leave these services in arrears. One would think, however, that these arrears would be discharged with the first extraordinaries that are voted. No such thing, however. When the extraordinaries for the next year come to be voted, new demands are found to have occurred, and the new extraordinaries must be applied to still newer extraordinaries. But if this is to be the mode of proceeding, is there not an end at once of our whole financial system? Are these new extraordinaries to be provided for beyond the vote of credit of two millions and a half, which may be applied to them regularly and constitutionally; and are these extraordinary demands to supersede the possibility of applying the money voted for extraordinary expences to past arrears? I shall put the case in another way; for though I do not wish to be tedious, I am anxious to make myself understood. When we vote the extraordinaries of the army this year, the money is not understood to be applicable to future services, but to the discharge of arrears already incurred, by making good the deficiencies in the estimates for last year. Now I will put the question—If, after passing the vote for paying off arrears, and after voting, as we have done this session, twenty or thirty millions for future services, we do not expect that the first thing to be done is to pay off the arrears with the four millions which have been voted for that purpose, and on the expediency of paying which, the House by this vote has already determined?—We find, however, that the practice of the right honourable gentleman has been directly the reverse. Now I will ask, upon what principle the old arrears are left unsettled; for if new demands arise, these demands may be paid with the vote of credit, or by a new fund provided for the purpose; by either of which means the violation of the law would be prevented, and the character of the country would not suffer from those disgraceful and scandalous arrears which degrade it in the eyes of the world, and which are insupportably oppressive to many individuals, who furnish supplies to Government. Independently of the perpetual confusion which such arrangements must produce in our accounts, how is Parliament to

know where this system may end? We may go on perpetually contracting debt, and perpetually voting extraordinaries for past deficiencies, but which are applied to new demands, leaving always the arrears unpaid. Having said so much upon the violation of the Appropriation Act, we come next to the consideration of the Pay-master's Act, which, I contend, has been directly and unnecessarily broken. If the Bank would not receive the Exchequer bills, which it is admitted they had a right to reject, why did not Government issue money in another way for the purpose for which these bills were issued? They afterwards, it seems, came to some arrangement with the Bank; but supposing this arrangement had never taken place, to what situation would they have been reduced? I will ask, in the first place, had the Bank, or had it not, a right to refuse these bills? They certainly had. They did refuse them for some time; the consequence of which was a breach of the act of Parliament. And if this arrangement had never taken place, Ministers would have been precisely in the situation of doing for a longer time, what they actually did for a short time, acting contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Pay-master's Act; for whether the money was in the hands of the Pay-master or of the Cashier, the balance was equally out of the hands of the Bank, to which it is entrusted by the act of Parliament. The honourable gentleman said a great deal in explanation of this act; but nothing that he advanced tended, in my opinion, to justify, to excuse, to palliate, or even to extenuate, his transgression of the law. In arguing upon the Appropriation Act, he contended that what he had done in defiance of its provisions, was not culpable, because the conduct he had pursued was countenanced, at least, by the silence of Parliament. I allow all the force that his argument can claim; and, upon the principles on which it rests, I contend, that where Parliament has not only complained of the evil, but provided a remedy, that this remedy demands, in the strongest manner, the respect of those on whose conduct it was intended that it should more immediately operate. What, then, is the language which Parliament has held upon the subject? We acknowledge, that army extraordinaries are an evil it is desirable to diminish as much as possible, but which, to a certain degree, is inevitable. But there is a particular grievance, which it is practicable, wise, and proper to rectify, namely, that which relates to the clothing of the army; and to this we apply the remedy of the Pay-master's Act. This act, however, has shared the fate of the Appropriation Act, and the defence which the right honourable gentleman sets up for the violation, is, that it does not imply a charge against him as First Lord of the Treasury. To

this I shall only reply, that my honourable friend's motion brings a charge indiscriminately against all His Majesty's Ministers. But, says the right honourable gentleman, the act requires what is impracticable, and imposes demands with which it is impossible to comply. Here, however, I complain of the Lords of the Treasury and of the Pay-master of the forces,—that knowing the House of Commons to have felt an existing abuse, and to have applied this act as a remedy, and finding its provisions to be wholly impracticable, they did not come forward in this House, and say, You have passed an act which is totally useless, and which, we can assure you, it is impossible to obey. This apology, however, the right honourable gentleman admitted to afford only a temporary excuse for making out the memorial required by the act. Why it was not done afterwards, was, because the payments were not made, for which the memorial was to vouch, and the payments were not made, because there was no money in the Exchequer with which to make them; and this deficiency arose from the unexpected amount of the extraordinaries of the army. The case then is this—that after having boasted of an intention to introduce a system which would effectually put an end to this mode of expence, he confesses that this article of expence has risen to such a degree, as to render it impossible for him, as Minister of the country, to pay any respect, either to the Appropriation Act, or to the Pay-master's Act. But I would ask, If, in framing his estimates, he ought not, in the first place, to take care that they shall not prove so deficient as to occasion a violation of a positive law? Or rather, Why does not he come down, and complain of the provisions of this act, of which he once so much approved, and which he was instrumental in getting passed, and get it repealed, instead of going on disobeying it from year to year? He perhaps chose, however, to leave it on the Statute-Book, as a monument of the inefficacy of Parliament, and as a memorial of the disposition which some men entertain to propose certain measures, merely with a view of catching popularity, which in different circumstances they will abandon and annul. It was said of Mr. Pulteney, and the friends of Sir Robert Walpole, that they talked mightily of reform when they were out of place, and that when they got into power, they did nothing. I am afraid that it will be said of the present Ministers, that after all the heat and violence which they once displayed against abuses, that they have not only done nothing, but that they have actually undone what was already done. With such inconsistency of proceedings, can they really expect to retain the public confidence, or can they imagine that such conduct does not tend to injure the character of the country?

The argument of the right honourable gentleman goes to neither more nor less than this—that this boasted act, the fruit of his repeated professions of patriotism, and the theme of so much panegyric, which was enacted with a more immediate view to a time of war, is absolutely, upon trial, found to be good for nothing. Respecting the three heads of Estimate, Credit, and Extraordinaries, the first should always be calculated as high as possible, the second article should always correspond as near as possible with the third, and the last should be as little as possible. Instead of that, however, I shall mention the barracks, which appeared under the head of Army Extraordinaries, but which it was admitted ought to have been provided for by estimate, merely to shew that the present Ministers are little anxious to avoid incurring a large expence for extraordinaries. But why may not extraordinaries be voted during the Session of Parliament, as soon as the services occur? For instance, were any extraordinary expence to occur on this day, the 6th of May, why should not money be voted for it immediately, if the vote of credit cannot cover it, rather than suffer it to leave an arrear upon the clothing of the army, or any other estimated expence?—And here I cannot refrain from remarking upon the boast that he sometimes makes upon the smallness of the votes of credit. Would it not be much better to increase these votes, than, year after year, to apply the money voted upon estimate to unforeseen services?—But, says he, it is impossible to calculate exactly the amount of any system of expence, or to foresee future contingencies (which I admit) and it is impossible to know for certain when the instalments upon a loan may be paid. To this I reply, that it is needless to reason upon suppositions, when we have facts before us. We know that the instalments upon the loan for 1795 were paid more rapidly than ever they had been at any former period, and yet in this very year the arrears, of which we so much complain, have been incurred.—On the question of the degree of blame which is imputable to Ministers, I have no difficulty in stating, that the violation of the Appropriation Act, to the enormous extent in which it has been violated by Ministers, implies a serious and weighty charge of criminality; but that the guilt attending the breach of the Pay-master's Act, defended, as it has been, upon principles which make that act nothing more than a piece of waste paper, is altogether unparalleled, and, in my opinion, is nothing more than a high crime and misdemeanor. Precedents in many cases, I admit, may tend to extenuate an offence; and though, on the trial of Lord Macclesfield, they were not considered as sufficient to screen him from punishment, yet I will allow that they offer some apology for the breach

of the Appropriation Act; but for the violation of the Pay-master's Act, not even precedent has been alledged as an excuse, nor any other circumstance which could justify me in withholding my support from the resolutions that my honourable friend has proposed.

Mr. STEELE said, that after the ample answer which his right honourable friend had given to the motion and the speech that introduced it, he would not be guilty of such an intrusion upon the patience of the House as to notice the charges farther than to reply to that part of them which directly related to his own office (that of joint Pay-master-General). Of the act, upon which one charge was grounded, he had himself too much occasion to witness the benefits, not to consider it worthy of the highest respect, and of all possible obedience. It had introduced order into the most intricate part of very difficult accounts; and had effectually prevented balances from accruing in the hands of Pay-masters. The real state of the present case was, that the clause for authorizing Colonels to draw half yearly for their off-reckonings was impossible to be exactly and formally obeyed, from the variety of documents which must be sent in, in order to entitle them to the payments. In time of war especially these were very numerous, and could not be speedily completed. It was necessary, for instance, that certificates of the delivery of cloathing abroad should be produced, in obtaining which, delay was, of course, unavoidable. The Paymaster who, for the sake of complying with the letter of the act, should make such payments without the proper documents, would be guilty of a crime towards his country. In point of fact, the money had been issued in April for the cloathing accounts, which became due in December, and the clothiers were still unable to receive it, for want of proper vouchers. The reason for there having been a balance in the Pay-master's hands arose from the custom of the Bank never to pay drafts otherwise than with cash or their own notes. Exchequer bills had been sent to them to make a payment with, and they had sent them back to the cashier of the Pay-Office. Being aware, however, that this circumstance might be exaggerated into an offence, he had entreated the Bank to receive these bills, and they, by departing from their custom in this respect, had put an end to the apparent balance, which, from these circumstances, and these alone, had been in the hands of the cashier of the Pay-Office. This was the real and true explanation of the affair. Mr. Steele moved the previous question upon the resolutions proposed by Mr. Grey.

Mr. SHERIDAN desired that the resolution adopted upon his motion in 1784 might be read, which was, of course, complied with. This was the resolution alluded to by Mr. Grey, declaring,



that if Parliament should be dissolved before the annual act of Appropriation could be passed, the Minister would be guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor, who should apply the sums voted by Parliament to other services than those to which they would of course be appropriated by that act. Mr. Sheridan thought the right honourable gentleman had spoken rather tauntingly of the resolution; if he now disdained the doctrine laid down in it, there was as much reason to be alarmed at such opinions as in any part of his practice.

The House then divided;

For the previous question, 209—Against it, 38—Majority, 171

*Saturday, 7th May.*

Sir PHILIP STEVENS brought up the Report of the Committee on the bill for continuing the reward for the discovery of the longitude.

The Report of the Committee of Supply which sat on Friday, was received, and the resolutions agreed to.

The Report of the Committee of Ways and Means was also brought up, and a bill pursuant to the resolution ordered to be brought in.

Mr. WINDHAM laid before the House an estimate of the number of foreign troops raised and to be raised for the service of the year 1796.

Mr. ROSE brought up a bill for continuing and enforcing the act, passed in the last session, for raising a certain number of men in each county. It was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second on Monday next.

*Monday, 9th May.*

Upon the order of the day for a Committee of Supply being read, the account of the navy, victualling and transport bills, were referred to the said Committee.

The statement of the charge of foreign troops raised, and to be raised, was ordered to be referred to the said Committee.

An account of the sums of money expended in the erection of barracks, was referred to the said Committee.

It was resolved, that the sum of 500,000*l.* be granted to His Majesty, towards discharging the debt of the navy.

That the sum of 130,000*l.* be granted to His Majesty towards defraying the extraordinaries of the army.

Upon the resolution being moved for granting the sum of

438,035l. for defraying the expence of foreign corps, raised for the service of Great Britain;

Mr. SHERIDAN said he should object, in the most positive terms, to this country's continuing to employ a set of men, who, it was apparent, were men that could not in any manner, or in any place, be depended on, and whom it was impossible, without betraying the interests of this country, to send either on an expedition to the West Indies, or any other place where troops might be necessary. He did not perfectly understand what might be the destination of the troops that were the objects of this expence, nor how many regiments of them at present existed; neither did he know where they were at present; but this he knew, that the employment of emigrants against their countrymen, had been attended with fatal consequences to this country, and had been productive only of that expence and disgrace which he was well assured the continuance of such an absurd system would but tend to increase and aggravate.

General TARLETON wished to know what regiments had been raised, and what was the present state of them. He only knew of a corps of French gentlemen, who served at a very moderate pay; he did not think there were at this time any regiments of emigrants.

The SECRETARY AT WAR observed, that the House should take into consideration the state of those unfortunate men, who had been forced to leave their country, many of them had been long in service, and were men of considerable rank; they were now employed upon the same terms on which the emigrants served in the regiments of La Chatres, Montenay, and Castres; they were stationed at Jersey and Guernsey, and they performed such duty as might be required of them. Humanity dictated to us to provide for men in their situation, and it was not only providing for them in a way the least likely to wound their feelings, but also beneficial to the service of the country to employ them in a military capacity.

Mr. GREY said, he had no objection to extend relief to any set of men whose situation appealed to the benevolence of the House. The emigrants certainly had that claim, and he should be glad to see every relief granted to them, but he did not see the necessity of providing for them as an army, after the experience we had of the little dependence which was to be placed on their exertions, particularly in the Quiberon affair. He thought it the duty of every member of that House to give it a decided negative.

The SECRETARY AT WAR could not conceive upon what

grounds gentlemen should suppose that the French corps, would betray the cause in which they were engaged, or act contrary to their professions. The failure of the Quiberon expedition was brought forward, but it was not to be inferred that the failure of that expedition was owing either to the mismanagement at home, or want of courage and energy in the French emigrants abroad; it was owing to one of those unforeseen circumstances that are likely to happen in every civil war; and it did not follow because there were some treacherous men who were employed in that expedition, that we should therefore cease to employ those emigrants whose detestation of their countrymen's conduct would operate to prevent them from following their example.

General TARLETON with respect to the Quiberon expedition observed, it was a matter of extreme surprise to him, that the honourable gentleman should withhold that information from the House, which would enable it to judge with accuracy, upon what was or was not the real cause of its failure. The right honourable gentleman, when first applied to for that purpose, did not himself make any solid objection to the production of whatever might be necessary for the information of the House; but an appeal to a higher power had furnished the honourable gentleman with a number of reasons why such information should not be granted. Certain he was, that if the papers which had been moved for respecting the business were brought forward, the right honourable gentleman would find there was that in them, which would be more than sufficient to call down upon him not only the censure, but the punishment of the House of Commons.

Mr. Chancellor PITT rose to object to any discussion on the subject at this time. He would convince the House by the most unanswerable arguments, of the impropriety and impolicy of producing the papers alluded to. If any gentleman thought proper to make a motion on that subject, he had no doubt of carrying conviction to the mind of every member in the House, as to the impolicy of acceding to such a request. He had no objection to go into a discussion of the business, if any gentleman thought the papers already produced contained sufficient grounds to arraign the conduct of Ministers, and would appoint a day for such discussion.

Mr. SHERIDAN replied to what had fallen from the right honourable Secretary at War, concerning the failure of the Quiberon expedition, being classed among the unforeseen calamities of civil war. If Ministers will employ men who are unworthy of trust and confidence, who have proved themselves so on every occasion where they have been trusted, what can be expected but defeat,

ruin, and disgrace? As to the Quiberon affair, he had always thought it, and should ever think it one of the worst planned, most inhumanly-mismanaged expeditions, that ever disgraced the annals of this, or any other country.

The resolution was agreed to.

The next resolution proposed was for granting the sum of 290,000*l* towards the expence of building barracks.

Mr. GREY pointedly reprobated the system. He conceived it a dangerous innovation on the Constitution.

Mr. HARRISON wished to know if the money was to be expended in erecting any new barracks.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, no new ones would be built unless they were wanted.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that the order of the day for the farther consideration of the report of the real-succession tax bill should be read, and the report now taken into consideration.

Mr. CREWE objected to the tax, and moved that the report be taken into farther consideration this day three months.

Lord GEORGE CAVENDISH seconded the motion. He said that this tax appeared liable to two principal objections. The insecurity which it would give to landed property, and the production of deeds, which, from the power vested in the Commissioners of the revenue, it would render necessary. It would tend to depreciate landed property. It would tend to equalise all property, and would operate as a confiscation of all the great landed estates in the country, for the use of the Government. Considering this as its effect, he was called upon to resist it, and if the levelling principle was carried into action, he cared but little whether it was introduced by the high hand of power, or came from the quarter which some most apprehended. As the bill had been but lately printed, and had only been one day in the hands of gentlemen, and as the principle of the measure was so new and important, he thought time should be given to consider it maturely, and that some delay should take place.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the degree in which the bill would affect landed property, was so small, that it could not have the effect of equalizing it in the way stated, nor could it operate as a confiscation of great property, since it operated only in proportion to the amount, and would be the same to great and to small. It was a tax that never could diminish the capital in any material degree. It never could be paid with reluctance, because the persons by whom it would be paid, would stand in that degree of relationship to the devisee, or intestate, which would induce them to con-

sider their acquisition of the property, either by devise or descent, as a remote, or unexpected event, and they would, of course, feel little or no hardship in paying the tax out of that property which, perhaps, they did not think they had a right to, at least did not expect to enjoy. How was it possible for this tax to swallow up the capital, in how many years could it produce such an effect? There must be a quick succession of collateral descents to produce any thing like such an effect; and it was not probable that collateral descent would occur successively, without the intervention of lineal descents. It had been said, that this tax would have an operation of a disagreeable nature to the public, by compelling them to the production of their title deeds, and a consequent exposition of their tenures, and the incumbrances that their estates might be subject to; this, he observed, was an unfair argument, and neither justifiable upon the principles of the bill, nor as matter of fact. The fact was, the bill in no instance went to compel the disclosure of any such circumstances. The noble Lord had said, it was necessary that at least the House should have more time to consider of a subject so important. The noble Lord could not be ignorant of the bill having been committed, reported, printed, and in the hands of every member several weeks since; and surely that was sufficient time to have taken its merits or demerits into consideration.

Mr. Alderman NEWNHAM said, it was a bill that must tend to the injury of the country; it would prevent men from acquiring landed property, as they would be conscious that they could not transmit it to a collateral relation, without its value being diminished by such a tax. It was a system that would deprive the country of its wealth and its inhabitants, as men would of course purchase land in other countries where no such restraint existed. The worthy Alderman said it was unworthy of the House of Commons to take the burden off from themselves and lay it on posterity. He was convinced it would be a tax odious to the public. That and the wine-duty bill would be considered as two of the most unpopular bills of the present Parliament.

Mr. HARRISON thought the principle of the bill very exceptionable, and that the clauses of it were so loosely drawn as to occasion much dispute.

Mr. M. ROBINSON opposed the bill.

Mr. BULLER objected to the principle of the bill, and though that so important a measure should not have been left to so late a period of the session and of the Parliament, when it could not obtain the consideration it required.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL said, that the principle of the measure had at least been long before the House. It was said on a former occasion, why, for the paltry sum of 100,000*l.* introduce the precedent of a tax of this nature? but if this was really a tax on capital, surely this sum bore little proportion to the landed capital of the country. In fact, it was a tax on income, to be paid by instalments during the first four years of possession.

Mr. FOX said, that all the objections to this measure remained in full force. It was in fact what he had stated it, a tax upon capital, for it was levied in proportion to that capital. If it was really a tax upon income, why not fairly lay it upon income? It was said that it was to be paid by instalments during the first four years, but if the same was paid by the man that enjoyed four and the man that enjoyed forty years, it could not with propriety be said to be a tax upon income. In such a country as this, all taxes on capital were particularly dangerous. He did not mean to undervalue the Constitution of this country, but he believed that much of our prosperity might be owing to the complete disposal of property which was enjoyed. If this tax had been laid on the transmission of property by sale, he believed no man would have denied its bad effect; but when freedom of disposal even at death was impaired by annexing burdens to the transmission, the bad consequences would, in a certain degree, be felt. In all cases where the payment of the tax depended upon the terms of succession, production of deeds was inevitable. Whether a brother succeeded as heir to his brother or to his father, in a variety of possible cases, he would be liable or not liable to the tax; of course a minute examination of settlements would be necessary, if the tax was meant to be effectively levied. With regard to the levying 100,000*l.* by the tax, it was not the extent of this sum, but the precedent that was thought to be dangerous: it might be extended to direct succession; and he saw no difference in the principle. It was said, there was less right to expect in the cases subject to the tax: but there were many instances where the expectation was greater in collateral than in direct descent, as in the case of entails, where the heir had a greater certainty of the possession than a son, whose father might dispose of what part of his estate he pleased. Upon the whole, there was no principle of taxation more destructive than that which tended to destroy forcibly the power of exchange and transmission, and thereby lessen the desire of acquisition. And, as this bill encroached upon this principle, he hoped, notwithstanding the result of former divisions, that the House would consider seriously the consequences that might follow from so new and unprecedented a system of taxation.

The **SECRETARY AT WAR** defended this mode of taxation, and maintained it was as easy a one as any in the present circumstances could be adopted; that it was justified by precedent, for the same principle was recognized in the Legacy bill: perhaps if this tax was rejected, some other more objectionable might be substituted. He was certain the tax could not be considered as any hardship on the Public, and the objections urged against it were such, as were untenable; upon the whole, it was a tax well deserving the attention of the House.

General **SMITH** spoke against the bill, as a paltry expedient for raising a trifling sum, which could have been much better supplied by different means.

Sir **WILLIAM PULTENEY** observed, that the arguments offered in support of this bill tended to shew that a long time would elapse before the tax would produce an effect upon the capital, and this he admitted might be true, because it was necessary to make a bad principle gradual in its operation; but he had no security against the increase of it if the principle were once established. The first bill went entirely to tax the capital, for landed property was valued at 28 years purchase, and the present bill was only substituted on account of the objectionable nature of the former, but although it was more mild, it did not vary in its principle. Property in the funds might be liable to such a tax for aught he knew, for if a shilling duty was laid upon every 1000*l.* invested in the funds, there would be no difference in principle. The right honourable gentleman defended the tax upon the principle of taking money from those who were able to pay it, which was neither more nor less than the principle of an highwayman. The bill acted against the spirit of the Constitution, which imposed taxes on articles of such a nature, as made it optional to every one, whether he would use the article so taxed; but this bill declares, that if the subject has money, Government will have a share of it. The only way in which collateral successors would be able to pay the tax within the limited time, would in numberless cases be by borrowing money, so that the first bill still stared them in the face. The tax would operate upon the capital instead of the income, and no one could doubt, but a tax upon lineal succession would take place when this upon collaterals had been established. Political writers had sometimes suggested a tax upon capital, by taking off all the taxes on consumption; but he had never met with a writer who advised a tax upon consumption and the capital too. The spirit of the Constitution hinged upon the equality of taxation, except in the instances of the land and house tax, which, though they approached near to the



principle of this tax, were better. Suppose a tax was imposed that affected London alone, all England would be in an uproar about it, because every town and village would expect it to be afterwards extended in the same arbitrary way. This principle lost America, and the increase of the stamp act and other taxes had been produced in the same gradual manner. The bill might pass now, but he was sure that it must be afterwards repealed, for although persons were to deliver an account of their estates by declaration, if that declaration were false they would be subject to a penalty, and consequently in order to attest the truth of that declaration, an opportunity was given to the Commissioners to call for an inspection of the private papers of every person whom they might choose to control. Upon these grounds he wished for the adoption of some other tax.

Mr. BASTARD thought the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) would have been the last man to have held out in the defence of such a measure. The principle of the bill originated in the Constituent Assembly of France, where the tree grew, and the fruit was now brought over to the British Parliament. It was an established rule in all taxes not to make more money than was due, but in this bill a contrary rule was established, and a provision made for returning the surplus back. Another provision which he reprobated was, that which suffered the Commissioners to take from one man what was due by another. The very expence attending the collecting of it also, he observed, would be greater than the tax, since persons must be employed for valuation, and Attorneys, and lastly, poor tenants would be obliged to come before the Commissioners of the land tax for the purpose of dispute. He supposed it would be so odious, that the Commissioners would frequently refuse to carry it into effect. He had himself lost an overcharge once upon the assessed taxes, rather than subject himself to the great trouble and inconvenience of recovery, and such would be the case with sons implicated in this bill. If the bill were only a tax on income, he saw no reason why places and pensions by reversion should not be subject, since they came within the purview of the bill. It reminded him of the fable of the Boy with the Goose and Golden Eggs, and he conceived it would be better to rip up the whole of property at once, than proceed step by step in this way to destroy it.

Mr. M. MONTAGU asked, whether they would take money from those who have it not? He approved of the bill, because it was brought forward to save property from the attacks of lawless banditti, by supporting a just and necessary war against Jacobin principles.

Sir ADAM FERGUSON said, whoever had been the framers

of the bill, they certainly had been entirely ignorant of the law of Scotland, as its provisions, as they at present stood, would be found to be wholly impracticable in that part of the kingdom. The honourable Baronet then entered into a detailed discussion of the different clauses in the bill, in support of his opinion. In the case which had been put of the liability of a second son to pay the tax in case of the death of his elder brother, he had no difficulty in saying, that by the law of Scotland he was clearly liable to the tax, which was not intended, as he understood, by the framers of the bill. There was also a clause for exempting mortgaged estates from the tax, which, certainly, was a very proper exception; but no mention was made of estates incumbered with personal debts, which by the law of Scotland, were understood to constitute as fair a claim upon the estate as a mortgage. These and several other observations, he stated, with a view of shewing the necessity of making some alterations in the bill, if they wished it to be effective. But he objected to the tax altogether, as one that would be particularly unpopular in Scotland, where there was a vast partiality to family estates, a partiality which it was wise to encourage, but which the present bill tended in no inconsiderable degree to diminish or to destroy.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL repeated the opinion that he had given on a former day, that the present was a very important measure. He professed, however, that he had heard no satisfactory reason why the bill should be thrown out, or the consideration of it postponed, because all the objections which the honourable Baronet, who had just sat down, had been so good as to start, might either be obviated or removed by amendments introduced into the bill; and because the objections which had been urged by another honourable Baronet against its principle, seemed to him to be totally groundless. After combating the objections to the particular clauses of the bill, he asserted that it was not a tax upon capital, but a tax upon income, which was to be paid by the heir by regular installments, in the course of the first four years after his succession, so that it did not affect the value of the inheritance: it was merely a tax upon his life estate. For if he died before these four years had elapsed, what was the consequence? After his death the whole was no longer liable to the tax. He contended that the tax was as eligible as any could be proposed, and he hoped that it would meet the approbation of a great majority of the House.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he could not give a silent vote on the question. He would not follow the learned gentleman through the long detail of the difference between the English and Scotch

laws. What had fallen from the gentlemen on both sides of the House, many of whom could not possibly be actuated by party motives, would, he trusted, induce the right honourable gentleman to grant the delay, which he perceived in a certain degree was wrung from him, in consequence of the arguments which he had heard this night. The Attorney General had made some general observations on taxes, and asserted, that in his mind, the present tax was less exceptionable than any he remembered to have been lately imposed. But the present, Mr. Sheridan was convinced, was the most execrable measure of finance that ever came before Parliament, and if he excepted the Legacy Bill, it was merely because it had been sanctioned by an act of the Legislature. He had no scruple to say, that both with respect to the Scotch and English laws, the present bill was utterly impracticable, and if time were allowed, even till Thursday, any gentleman who examined it with a keen eye would see that it abounded with the grossest errors and inconsistencies. He was against any tax that shifted the burden to posterity; for he thought that those who submitted to measures which necessarily produced taxation, should themselves feel the burden, as it might operate to prevent them from supporting the present irrational system of warfare. He had used this language on a former occasion, and he would use it again, though it might be perverted as heretofore without doors by those who made him say, that he wished that the people were heavily burthened with taxes. The present measure was defended on the grounds, that it was a tax to support a war calculated to put a stop to the progress of Jacobin principles, and to prevent the poor from robbing the rich. Was the measure desirable on the grounds, that His Majesty's Ministers were justifiable in robbing the rich in preference to the poor? Such an argument reminded him of the shepherd in the farce, who said he had a mode of curing the sheep of the rot; but when asked how, he replied, by *cutting their throats*.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH opposed the principle of the bill, and the clause particularly which related to quarries and mines, as these belonged, in many instances, to the proprietor of the soil, and would be liable to a double tax.

Mr. Chancellor PITT reminded the House that the only question now was, whether the bill should be postponed for three months, which was equal to rejecting the bill. That he should be against postponing it; but in the consideration of the Report there would be an opportunity of discussing many of the points which had been pressed in the course of this debate.

Mr. MARTIN observed, that he had heard it said, it was surprising that this bill should be so unpopular out of doors, and yet that there should be so little opposition to it in that House.—He had seen too many things of that kind to make the thing surprising to him. It would always be so until the people had a better representation in Parliament. He disapproved of the bill.

The House divided,

For the consideration of the Report now, - - - 81

For postponing it three months, - - - 52

The House then proceeded to take the Report into consideration.

Mr. Chancellor PITT gave notice, that he should have a measure to propose on the third reading of the bill, by way of obviating some objections with regard to the operation it might have, as it stood, upon property in mines.

The amendments were then all read, agreed to, the bill ordered to be engrossed, to be read a third time on Thursday, if then engrossed, and to be printed.

Mr. GREY observed, that a reserve was made by the Minister, when he opened the Supply and Ways and Means of the year, by which he secured to himself a power of making another Austrian Loan. He wished to know what were the Minister's intentions upon that subject?—Did he mean to bring such Loan forward this session?—If he did, he should be glad to know the day; because he should think it necessary to move for a call of the House on such an occasion. He wished to know whether the Minister had made up his mind on that subject—whether he was to make use of the power which he seemed to have kept in reserve?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, in answer to the question of the honourable gentleman, it was not his intention, in the course of the present Session of Parliament, to make any proposition of that kind.

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN moved the Order of the Day on the bill for regulating the mode of carrying negroes from Africa to the West-Indies, &c. which being read,

General TARLETON presented a petition from Liverpool, praying that the bill may not pass into a law.—Referred to the Committee on the bill.

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN then observed, that it was too late to go into the Committee of the whole House on this bill to-night, and therefore he should move that the House should go into that Committee on Wednesday next.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH desired the House to consider, whether or not they were likely to have a full attendance on that day,

for the subject was of very great importance, and deserved the serious attention of the House. At all events, care should be taken that the bill should not be lost, from the advanced period of the session.

The bill was then ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Wednesday next.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that he learned he was misunderstood with regard to the motion which he intended to make on the papers now before the House, relative to the conduct of the West-India and Quiberon expeditions. He did not wish, at all events, to delay his motion upon that subject to Wednesday se'night. He understood that all the papers laid before the House, upon that subject, would be printed by Thursday, and therefore he should make his motion on Friday next. After a few words from Mr. Dundas, Mr. Sheridan's motion was understood to stand for Friday next.

Mr. Sheridan then observed, that his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) had asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question, Whether he intended that an Austrian loan should take place? To which the right honourable gentleman answered—"Not in the present session." This answer was a little ambiguous. He would say, however, he supposed the right honourable gentleman did not mean to propose another Austrian loan. We were to understand now that no money would be advanced to the Emperor from the Executive Government of this country.

Mr. Chancellor PITT. "The question, as it is now put to me, is one which I cannot answer. One question is, Whether I shall propose a loan to the Emperor in another session?—To that I say, according to circumstances which shall exist in another session it must be regulated. I have no difficulty, however, in saying, that if at any period it shall be necessary, for the express purpose of considering the propriety of a loan to the Emperor, to call on Parliament, I may do so; I by no means wish to pledge myself not to call on Parliament for that purpose, if it appears to me to be according to the general interests of the common cause to do so. On the contrary, I admit that it may be necessary and proper. I beg to be understood that I do not give up an Austrian loan this year; I only say, I shall not propose it this session.

Mr. GREY. "The right honourable gentleman now says, he does not mean to debar himself from calling on Parliament in a future session, if necessary, for the purpose of granting a loan to the Emperor; but before he comes to pledge the House to any thing upon that subject, we have a right to ask him, Whether he has it in contemplation to advance to the Emperor, under any pretence

whatever of serving the common cause, a sum of money without the consent of Parliament? Am I to understand this from him—that he has it not in contemplation to propose to advance any sum of money to the Emperor during the recess? Because, if he has it in contemplation to advance money to the Emperor at this moment, under the plea of public necessity, and to propose the ratification of that act in a future session of Parliament, or perhaps to a new Parliament, I should endeavour to record a determination of this House, at least I should propose it to the House before we separate, that “to advance money to the Emperor, without the consent of Parliament, is a high crime and misdemeanor,”—for this, in such a case, appears to me to be our duty.”

Mr. Chancellor PITT. “If His Majesty’s Ministers should see circumstances which should induce them to advance money to the Emperor, or any other of His Majesty’s Allies, for fulfilling the purpose of the alliance, what they should advance is a question to which I cannot be called upon to give an answer. His Majesty’s Ministers must exercise their discretion upon that subject; in the exercise of that discretion they will be responsible to Parliament. If any such necessity should arise, that will be a fit subject for the consideration of Parliament, and then the question will be—“Whether Parliament shall be satisfied with the exercise of that discretion?” Therefore I conceive I cannot give a better answer in the present moment.”

Mr. GREY. “I cannot suffer the business to pass in this manner. It is the duty of this House not to transfer its rights to others. I do not ask, Whether, in some possible event, a case might not arise, on which the King’s Ministers might exercise their discretion, but whether they think it possible that such a case arises out of the present matter, or whether they have any intention of advancing money without applying to Parliament? The right honourable gentleman shewed us what he could do in this way three years ago.—He should shew us now whether he has any thing of this kind in contemplation; if he has, he ought to propose it to the House.—Should he omit to propose it, and afterwards proceed upon any views which he may entertain in the present moment of a supposed necessity, I say, such conduct will be a high crime and misdemeanor, and for which he will, I hope, be very seriously responsible hereafter. He talks now very lightly of these things, but the day may come when they will be very serious things to him. I am willing to move this now, if necessary,—“That to apply money, during the recess, for a loan to the Emperor, without the consent of Parliament, is a high crime and misdemeanor.”

Mr. Chancellor PITT. "The honourable gentleman will consider whether he will make any proposition to the House or not; that is for him to decide according to his own discretion. To his question I shall not make any other answer."

Mr. GREY. "Then my question, I understand, is answered."

Mr. M. ROBINSON was proceeding, when the Speaker observed there was no question before the House.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that the conversation was certainly regular. There was nothing more clear than that a question such as that put by his honourable friend was regular. He concurred entirely with his honourable friend, that if the Minister advanced to the Emperor any money, which he might now have in contemplation to advance during the recess, without the consent of Parliament, he would be guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS called to order. He apprehended that the whole of this conversation was out of order, for there was another proceeding before the House.

The SPEAKER said, there was a question about to be put; but he had not put it.

Mr. SHERIDAN then observed, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had it in contemplation to furnish the Emperor with money in the recess, he should say so, in order that the House might give him authority for that purpose. What objection could he have to declare his intentions on that head? Was it not safer, than afterwards to come to the House for an indemnity? He had no objection to move—"That if the Minister had it now in contemplation to send money to the Emperor, and should send it during the recess, without the consent of Parliament, he would be guilty of a high misdemeanor."

This produced a cry of "Move! move!" from the Ministerial side, and here the conversation ended.

*Tuesday, 10th May.*

On the question being put, for the third reading of the Wine-duty bill,

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that notwithstanding the notice he had given of his intention to move for a clause to render the stock of wine in the hands of private gentlemen equally liable to the new duty as that in the hands of dealers, he should decline making any motion to that effect. It would certainly be unjust to introduce excise-officers into the cellars of private gentlemen, although not more so than to tax the stock at present in the hands of dealers. It was far



The MASTER of the ROLLS said, he had some objections to offer ; upon which

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR discharged the order of the commitment till to-morrow.

Mr. FOX. It having fallen to my lot, both at the commencement, and in the course of the war, to trouble the House with several motions which have not been honoured with their concurrence, and having last session proposed an inquiry into the State of the Nation, to which the House of Commons did not think proper to assent, it may be thought by some, perhaps, to be rather presuming in me, again to call their attention to the same subject. And I confess that if some events had not occurred during the last year, rather singular in their nature, I should have, however reluctantly, acquiesced in the former decisions of the House, after having entered my solemn protest against the plans that were adopted, and avowed my strong and complete disapprobation of the whole system of measures that has been pursued. There certainly however have happened, during the last year, some events, which must, in no inconsiderable degree, have tended to alter the sentiments of those with whom I had the misfortune to differ, as well as to strengthen and confirm the former opinions of those with whom I have the honour to agree. The event of great importance, and to which I particularly allude is, the negociation at Basse, and the notice which had been given of the negociation with foreign powers. As I shall have occasion to comment upon this transaction more fully afterwards, I shall only say at present, that notwithstanding all the applauses that have been bestowed upon it, the result cannot fail to draw the attention of every thinking man to the present posture of public affairs ; it must call the attention of every man who is not determined to act blindly (a description of persons, of whom I hope there are none in this House) to the situation of the country, and that line of conduct which the Government ought to follow. For one thing that we have learned is, whether Ministers have acted wisely or not, (no matter which for our present purpose,) that we have no immediate prospect of peace. It signifies but little, whether the obstacle may have arisen from the unreasonable demands of the enemy, or the mismanagement of His Majesty's Ministers ; but of this we are ascertained, that we have no prospect of peace (an event much to be lamented, but more especially in the present circumstances of the country) and that it is not in the power of those who are intrusted with the administration of public affairs, to obtain terms from the enemy, which they dare to offer to the nation.—Whatever may

be our opinions of the causes which have led to this situation, we must all be agreed as to the effect; and none, I presume, will dispute that our situation is worse than it was at the period when, either by conquest or concession, we had a prospect of approaching peace. Having stated this point, upon which there can be no difference of opinion, I shall go into a detail of those circumstances which, in my mind, have reduced us to the situation in which we are now placed. I know the language which has been held by the Executive Government on former occasions of a similar nature, and the language which may be used by the Executive Government on the present, because it is its interest to use it, is, that it is not our business to inquire into the causes of the evil, but into the best mode of remedy. If these could be separated, I admit that the conclusion would be just, but as long as man remains the same, I contend that there is no mode of extricating ourselves from danger, but by retracting the circumstances by which we have been involved in the difficulties of which we complain.—The first thing to be done then is, to take an impartial review of past events, which have led to the situation in which we now stand, that the country may be enabled to take some steps to extricate itself from the situation into which it has fallen. I shall, therefore, rather look retrospectively than prospectively, and in my retrospective view I shall not go farther back than the American war. Most Members in the House will recollect the calamities and misfortunes which befel us in that contest, and also the terms of peace which in the end we were constrained to make, terms which I shall not argue at present, whether it was or was not for the advantage of the country to accept, in the circumstances in which it was then placed. Many will also recollect the discussions which took place in the course of that war, and the constant argument which on all occasions was pressed from the Ministerial side of the House, that we ought to look not retrospectively, but prospectively; that when the house was on fire, the question was not how the fire was kindled, but how it could be most speedily and effectually extinguished. The argument which we opposed to that was one founded upon solid principles, and one which the House listened to at last; that a consideration of past errors would lead to future amendment; and that a change of measures would lead to a change of circumstances; and I appeal to fact, if the truth of this argument was not confirmed by experience. As long as we declined going into a retrospective inquiry, the war continued, and our misfortunes increased; but from the moment that the House adopted a resolution to inquire into its past errors, measures were

from his wish to have the excise extended to private families, as well from his dislike of the system, as that it might have a tendency to make servants spies on the proceedings of their masters. He could wish that the new duty on wines should be confined to future importations, and not made to include the stock at present on hand; and he must caution the Minister against laying too heavy a duty on the article, as such a step would, in all likelihood, in the course of a very short time, operate as a prohibition. Although it might appear that the consumption of wine, during the last year, was greater than in other preceding ones, yet he should recollect the old proverb, "that an additional hair may break the camel's back." His intention was to move a clause to the bill, by way of rider, providing, that the wines imported in consequence of the recent orders sent abroad, which may arrive by the first of July next, should be liable to the new duties, payable by instalments, in the same manner as the duties upon stock in hand.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was happy to find the honourable gentleman had abandoned his original intention of proposing to include the stock of private gentlemen under the new duties; and if he had a rider to the effect mentioned ready to be added to the bill, he should have no objection to adopt his proposition; or as it was likely the honourable gentleman had not found it convenient to prepare the clause recommended by him, he should postpone the third reading till to-morrow, by which time he should himself be prepared with one to the same effect.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he considered it due from him to apologize to the House for not being prepared with a rider, pursuant to his intention; but he was completely taken by surprise by the right honourable gentleman, as he felt nothing more astonishing than that he should adopt any proposition submitted by him to the House.

Mr. GREY said, that the Custom-house officers had collected the duty proposed by the bill, before it had received the sanction of the Legislature. He had on a former night mentioned the same proceeding, and was then perfectly satisfied with the answer of an honourable gentleman (Mr. Rose) on that occasion. He had, however, since that time, received a letter from Mr. Hayward, a merchant, who lived at No. 59, Fenchurch-street, which stated, that the officers of the Customs had levied the duty on several pipes of wine, amounting in the whole to 136l. The Commissioners of the Customs had been petitioned on the subject, but the money had not been returned. He hoped that the matter would be inquired into,

and measures taken to prevent the levying of the tax, until the bill had received the sanction of the Legislature.

Mr. FRANCIS, for the purpose of detecting frauds, suggested that stamps should be fixed on bottles to ascertain their size. He was opinion, that if the plan of taxation, laid down in the bill, continued to be followed up, it would end in the ruin of the Revenue. The third reading of the bill was deferred till to-morrow.

The order of the day for the commitment of the Quaker's bill was read.

Mr. FRANCIS offered one observation. It was a matter of fact that the scruples of conscience, stated to form the grounds of the necessity of this bill, did not proceed from the individuals themselves, but from the operation of an higher power, which at the yearly meeting prescribed rules and orders in the manner of a government, and excommunicated the persons who did not obey them. If such were the fact, he thought that dictatorial power ought to be checked, and the persons inclined to obey the laws of their country protected.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR thought it would be difficult for the House to take cognizance of this objection, and dive into the hearts of men, for the causes and motives that regulate their opinions. Whatever the scruples of the Quakers may be, they did not interfere with the rights of others, and that he considered to be the necessary question.

Mr. EAST objected to the bill, because it gave a relief to Quakers from the process of the Ecclesiastical Court, which was an indulgence not allowed to the members of the Church of England.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR contended, that they were not put upon an equal footing, on account of the expence of the proceedings occasioned by their non-conformity.

The SPEAKER thought that the honourable and learned gentleman had intended to put off the commitment when he moved for the reading of the order of the day. If the right honourable gentleman, who had given notice of a motion on this day, chose to delay it, he might, but otherwise it was the established practice of that House, that when a notice was given, it should supersede every order of the day.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR supposed, that as the right honourable gentleman approved of the principle of the bill, he would rather submit to some small delay, than suffer this bill to be lost.

Mr. FOX was obliged to the Speaker for his observation; and said, he must certainly assert his right to priority, if a discussion was likely to take place in the Committee, instead of upon the report.

in the very moment when they were thirsting most for aggrandizement, that I have little faith to repose in them—so little, indeed, that I cannot believe that the pacific views of Ministers were founded upon these professions which were made by the French; but at that very time France was either engaged in actual hostilities with Austria, or on the point of commencing hostilities. War was either begun, or there was a moral certainty, that it would take place. Without now discussing a point (on which, however, I have no difficulty in my own mind) whether Austria or France was the aggressor, it was sufficient that Ministers knew at the time, that an aggression had been made on the part of one of those powers. And notwithstanding the defeats which attended the French arms at the outset, it was the general opinion that the Austrian territory was defenceless, and that it would soon be overrun by the enemy's arms. But even then a fifteen-years peace was talked of. I must here state a fact, which certainly is not officially confirmed, but which rests upon the general belief of Europe, that before hostilities commenced between Austria and France, an insinuation, or rather a communication, was made by England to the latter power, that if they attempted any aggression upon the territories of Holland, which at that time was our ally, we should be obliged to break the neutrality that we had observed, and interfere in the contest. This message has been differently interpreted.—Some have put upon it the interpretation, which I think, upon the whole, is the fair one, that it was our policy to take all prudent means of avoiding any part in the war. Others I know have put upon it a more invidious construction, and insinuated that our meaning was neither more nor less than this, speaking to the French, "Take you Austria and do with it what you please, but we set up the limits of Holland, beyond which you shall not pass." I state this to shew at that time Ministers did not foresee any probable event which might occasion a rupture between this country and France. That this also was the general opinion of the House in the Spring 1792, I need not spend time in convincing them. I shall however barely mention a small circumstance of a financial nature, which happened near the close of the session, which proves the fact beyond dispute. I mean the measure of funding the 4 per cents. At that time the 3 per cent. consols had risen to 95, 96, and 97, and it was the opinion of the right honourable gentleman that they would rise to par, and in this conviction, with a view of a probable saving, he had lost the opportunity of a certain saving to the nation of a perpetual annuity of 240,000l.; a thing of such magnitude as to prove to the House that at that time the right honour-

able gentleman had no expectation that the peace was likely to be disturbed, since it induced him to forego the great good which was in his power, in the hope of the small and trifling addition that might have accrued on the extent of the 3 per cents. rising to par. I mention this as a fact subsidiary to the declarations which the Minister made at the commencement of that session, and which proved, that to the end of it he continued to entertain the same confidence of peace. Thus ended the session, of 1792. In the course of the Summer 1792, various events of various kinds took place. The Revolution of the 10th of August chiefly deserves notice. I shall not now comment upon the nature of that Revolution, I shall speak of it merely as a Member of the British Legislature, and as an event connected with the interests of this country. The great alteration that it had produced was changing the Government of France from Monarchy to a Republic. I know that these are excellent words, and well adapted, as the history of our country has proved, for enlisting men under opposite standards. But this is not the view in which that Revolution is to be considered, as affecting the policy of this country. Let us in the first place consider its influence upon this country, in the way of example, and the prevalence which it was likely to give to Jacobin principles throughout Europe. After this country had seen the order of the nobility destroyed, and their titles abolished, when it had seen the system of equality carried to as great a length as it was possible to carry it, except in that one instance of the existence of a King, I will even ask those who are fondest of the name of Monarchy, (I beg not to be understood as speaking in the least disrespectfully of that form of Government,) if there was any thing in the Monarchy of France previous to the 10th of August, which tended to fortify the English Monarchy? Or if there was any thing in the subsequent Revolution which tended to render it less secure than it was immediately before that event happened, when no danger was apprehended? I will ask if there be any so attached to the name of Monarchy, as after having patiently borne every other consequence of Jacobin principles, to induce men to tremble at the annihilation of merely the name? I come now to a nearer view of circumstances—and I will ask, if there be a greater or less prospect of peace between this country and France, since the expulsion of the House of Bourbon, than before? It is not my disposition, and it is far from being my wish on the present occasion, to triumph over the distresses of a fallen family. But considering them as Kings of France, as trustees for the happiness of a great nation, and remembering at the same time my old English prejudices, and I may

farther add, old English history, can I regret that expulsion as an event unfavourable to the happiness of the people of France, or injurious to the tranquillity of Great Britain? Lest, however, I should be thought by some to approve more of the conduct of Ministers than I really do, I here find it necessary to say a few words in explanation. I approve of their sentiments, in as far as they thought that the French Revolution did not afford a sufficient cause for this country involving itself in a war, and I approve of their conduct, in as far as it proceeded upon a determination to abide by an invariable line of neutrality, if universal tranquillity could not be preserved. I differ, however, with them upon the means of preserving this neutrality. I think there was a time before the war broke out with Austria, which presented an opportunity for this country to exercise the great and splendid office of a mediator, which would not only have been highly honourable to itself, and beneficial to Europe, but an office which it was in some measure called upon to undertake by the events of the preceding year. The event to which I particularly refer was the treaty of Pilnitz, by which Russia and Prussia avowed their intention of interfering in the internal affairs of France, if they should be supported by the other powers of Europe, which certainly was to all intents and purposes an aggression against France. The circumstances of the transaction itself, pointed out the propriety of this mediation on the part of Great Britain. This treaty, I really believe, was never intended to be acted upon; but this certainly does not lessen the aggression, much less the insult which it carried to France. The Emperor at that time was importuned by the emigrant nobility and clergy to interfere in the domestic affairs of France. Austria did not dare to interfere without the co-operation of Prussia, and Prussia did not wish to hazard the fate of such an enterprize. When those powers were in this state of uncertainty, that was the very moment for England to become a mediator; and if this country had at that time proposed fair terms of accommodation to the parties, the matter might have been compromised, and the peace of Europe preserved, at least for some time, for God knows the period of peace is at all times uncertain. If England had then come forward as a mediator, the questions to be agitated would have related solely to Lorraine and Alsace; and is there any man that believes, putting out of the question the internal affairs of France altogether, that under the impartial mediation of this country, all the difficulties respecting the tenures of the nobility, and the right of the chapters in those two provinces, might not have been easily settled to the satisfaction of the disputants? I cannot conceive that Ministers, in concerting



their schemes, adopting the measures which they have pursued, could be influenced by any secret principle so depraved and truly impolitic, as to be induced to contemplate with satisfaction the growing seeds of discord, under the idea that this country would flourish, whilst the other powers of Europe were exhausting themselves in contention and war. Neutrality I admit to have been preferable to an active share in the contest; but to a nation like Great Britain, whose prosperity depends upon her commerce, the general tranquillity of Europe is a far greater blessing (laying the general interests of mankind out of the question) than any partial neutrality which it could preserve. I hope, therefore, that it was upon no such contracted views that Ministers declined the office of mediators at the period to which I allude. One would think however, that after refusing such interference, they would have been the last men in the world to intermeddle with the internal government of another country. It is not necessary for me to refer to the horrible scenes that were exhibited in France in the month of September; I merely mention them that it may not be said that I wished to pass them over in silence, or without expressing those feelings which I, in common with all mankind, experienced, on hearing of atrocities which have excited the indignation of Europe, and which have been accompanied with the outcries of humanity. However monstrous they have been, they have no relation to the present question; they have no small resemblance, however, to the massacres in Paris in former times; massacres in which Great Britain was much more interested, than in the events of the month of September 1792, but in which she did not then interfere; a conduct, the propriety of which it fell to the province of the historian to discuss.

We come now to the successful invasion of the Austrian Netherlands, by the French, under General Dumourier. How far it would have been wise in this country to have permitted France to remain in possession of this key to Holland, I shall not now argue. But what happened in October was apprehended in April; and if it is once admitted as a principle, that it was impossible for this country to have allowed to France the quiet possession of this territory, would it not have been wise in this country to have prevented the invasion, by a mediation between the two powers? Perhaps, it may be said, that they trusted that the great military power of Austria would be able, if not to resist the invasion in the first instance, at least to compel them to retire. If this was the policy with which they acted, it certainly was a policy more than ordinarily shallow. It would have been advisable in this, as in every instance of a similar nature, to adopt a resolution at the outset, and

to act upon it with uniformity, firmness, and consistency. Supposing France to be successful, did you expect to strike in at the end of the war; and speak to France as you did in the case of Russia and the Porte, when you vauntingly said to Russia, you shall not keep Ockzakow as an indemnity for the expences of the war? What was the consequence, however, when you came forward in this arrogant and imperious tone? You were not seconded by the country; you were condemned, as assuming haughty and unwarrantable pretensions, by every impartial man in Europe; and in the end you were obliged to send a Minister to Petersburg to recant, retract, and to renounce every thing that you had said. Had you pursued the same conduct in respect to France, you would have been reduced to the same dilemma. The more the aggrandizement of France was to be dreaded, the stronger motives we had to have exercised the office of a mediator before the war commenced. In a short time after Lord Gower was recalled from Paris; a circumstance which I always lamented, because from that moment the continuance of peace between the countries became more doubtful; and this brings me to the immediate causes of the war. These have generally been reduced to three: first, the way in which certain individuals belonging to the Corresponding Society in this country were received by the Government of France; secondly, the decree of the 19th of November; and, thirdly, the claims which were set up against the monopoly held by the Dutch of the navigation of the Scheldt. The first appears to me to be so insignificant as not to be worthy of a serious answer. In the first place, in order to give it shape, in order to make it fit for being put down on paper, you must begin with assuming that there was a Government in France to whom you might complain, and from whom you might demand redress. But was there ever any complaint made, or any dissatisfaction stated? Respecting the decree of the 19th of November, did you ever complain of it; did you ever demand that it should be either revoked or explained? This is a circumstance so intimately connected with the existence of a Government in France, that I know not how to separate them. You refused to recognize the Government of France, and from that very moment all the means of conciliation and explanation were at an end. Things were then brought to the *ultimo ratio regum*; for the moment that you cut off all means of explanation, you virtually made a declaration of war. But though you arrogantly and unwisely refused to recognize the Government of France, you allowed M. Chauvelin to remain here, and from the papers which passed between him and the King's Ministers at the time, the French seem to have shewn a strong disposition to explain

that decree. Why then, it will be asked; did they not explain it? Because they did not know what explanation would be satisfactory. But it is admitted by all the writers on the laws of nations that I have read, that an insult, or even an aggression, is not sufficient cause of war, till explanation, or redress, is demanded and refused, and that the party who refuses an opportunity of explanation to the other, is the aggressor. This opportunity, however, was denied to the French; and upon these principles England was the aggressor. With respect to the opening of the Scheldt, is there any man who does not believe, that if a negotiation had then been attempted, that matters might not have been arranged to the mutual satisfaction of the parties? This was even admitted by the House—for what was the favourite argument at the time? England is the last power in Europe upon whom the French will make war; but after devouring the rest of Europe, they will swallow you up at last. Upon this part of the argument I am a good deal relieved by subsequent events. And here I am sorry to allude to the opinions of a gentleman (Mr. Burke,) who is no longer a Member of this House, but from the part he took in the politics of the country at the time; and the effect which his eloquence has produced, I find it impossible to speak of the history of the times, without saying something on the doctrines and sentiments of that able and respectable man. In a most admirable performance, he has charmed all the world with the brilliancy of his genius, fascinated the country with the powers of his eloquence, and in as far as that cause went to produce this effect, plunged the country into all the calamities consequent upon the war. I admire the genius of the man, and I admit the integrity and usefulness of his long public life; but I cannot but lament that his talents, when, in my opinion, they were directed most beneficially to the interest of his country, produced very little effect, and that when he espoused sentiments different from those which I held to be wise and expedient, that then his exertions should have been crowned with a success that I deplore. Never, certainly, was there a nation more dazzled than the people of this country were by the brilliancy of this performance of Mr. Burke.

Much of the lustre of his opponents, as well as of friends, was drawn from the imitation of this dazzling orb; but it was the brilliancy of a fatal constellation, which bore terror and desolation in its train; and, as the poet had described, was

“Terrific splendor, whose red-hot breath

“Holds out destruction, fire and death.”

And we were to this day suffering the dreadful ravages of the fire

that this mighty comet had spread. This able man had no bounds in his opposition to my proposition for recognizing the government of France. It was represented as a proposition to petition France for peace, by throwing ourselves at her feet, to surrender our beloved sovereign's head to the block : in fine, intirely to give up the Constitution. And why ? Because it was to treat with regicides, though the unfortunate event (for such I shall always call it) of the death of that unhappy prince had not as yet taken place. When the question comes to be re-considered, I am confident that the country will not be of this opinion. But now I have even Ministers themselves as accessaries to the fact, after it has actually happened. By this petition or message to the Directory have they not acknowledged the power of these very men who pride themselves upon the part they took in promoting that unfortunate event, and who now celebrate it by an Anniversary Festival. For what purpose do I mention this, but to shew that I did not wish to surrender the constitution, which has been handed down to us from our ancestors, cemented with their blood, and that it was no part of my design to bring the head of our beloved sovereign to the block ? But to return to the opening of the Scheldt. I am not one of those who conceive the navigation of the Scheldt to be of no importance at all ; but to Holland, qualified in its present circumstances, I think it was of very little importance. It may be asked, however, are you to judge what is and what is not for the interest of Holland ? Are not the Dutch much better judges of what is for their interest than you are ? Far, far better certainly, is my answer. But did the Dutch themselves at the time think it an object worth disputing about, or did not we drag them reluctantly into the contest ?—There were a variety of other arguments used at the time. I do not wish to recall the language of any particular gentleman to the recollection of the House ; but as there was one argument alledged against a proposition which I had the honour to make, I have more particular reason to remember it. I was told, that we ought not to recognize the French Republic, for fear of disgusting our allies. Let us inquire then, who were our allies at the time ? The States General were among the number. Then it was said, that even those who were disaffected to the interest of the Stadtholder, were so aristocratic in their sentiments, that they would spurn with indignation at French principles, and that an invasion would heal all the internal divisions which subsisted in that Republic. Notwithstanding these assertions, however, I have heard, and I know it is commonly believed, that Holland was not conquered by the arms of France, but by

the disaffection of the Dutch to the cause in which they were engaged. Our other allies were Austria and Prussia. Whether the King of Prussia has acted to this country with fidelity and honour, or with falsehood and perfidy ; whether he has performed his engagements, or whether he has violated the faith of the treaty, we have never been informed by Ministers ; but this I will ask, whether after granting him an enormous subsidy, a subsidy which must be regarded as most extravagant, when compared with the amount of the services which he has performed ; whether if you had thought proper to recognize the French Republic before you entered into the war, he would have deserted you one day sooner, or swallowed up more of the treasure of the country than he has done ? With respect to Austria, is there any man who seriously believes, that though we had recognized the French Republic, that we might not have availed ourselves as much as we can do at this moment, of the service of that power ? Even, though Austria had been disgusted, all that she could have done, would have been to make a separate peace, which would have probably been the means of restoring general tranquillity, because that must have happened before we engaged in the war. But if this danger would have attended the recognition of the French Republic before, may not the effect be produced by the late negotiation at Basle, in which Austria was not a party ? It was argued that a recognition implied an approbation of every thing that had passed. But this I denied when the objection was taken, and still persist in denying. On the question of—Who was the aggressor ?—I contend, that by the law of nations, as it is explained by the best writers upon the subject, we were the aggressors, because we refused to give to France an opportunity of redressing those grievances of which we complained. We come next to the period at which we began to take an active part in the contest. When our armies first appeared in the field, the enemy were forced to retire from the territories which they had occupied—They were completely driven out of the Netherlands, and you were in possession of almost all French Flanders. At this period, it was reported that a person of the name of Maret, made proposals for peace, on the part of the French, which were not listened to by His Majesty's Ministers. Why then, I ask, did you not make peace at this prosperous juncture, when the enemy were defeated in every battle, when they were driven from the frontiers of our allies which they had occupied ; when we had made a considerable impression upon French Flanders ; when, excepting Savoy, they had not one foot of land belonging to our allies, and when they might have been

disposed to purchase terms of peace by a considerable sacrifice of territory? Why did we not make peace in these circumstances? Why, because the system on which Ministers had set out was deserted—because you no longer confined your views to the security of your allies; but infatuated with success, you began to seek for indemnity. The declining to negotiate at this period, I set down as a principal cause of all our succeeding calamities.

I cannot help remarking, that there has been a good deal of inconsistency in the mode of arguing adopted by those who have been adverse to negotiation. When the French were successful, I was asked—What! would you humble the country so far as to beg peace from the enemy, in the moment of her victories? And when the allies were successful in their turn, I was told that we must not treat at a time when our armies were every where triumphant, and when nothing but disgrace and defeat marked the progress of the enemy; that then was the period to avail ourselves of our good fortune, and reap the fruits of our victories. It was even at one time thought advisable to push our victories so far as to march to Paris. Upon the project of effecting a counter-revolution in France, having said so much on former occasions, I shall not enlarge on the subject at present. The great defect in the management of the war, however, has, in my opinion, been the want of a determinate object for which you have been contending. You have neither carried on war for the purpose of restoring monarchy in France, nor with a view to your own advantage. While the Emperor in Alsace was taking towns in the name of the King of Hungary, you were taking Valenciennes for the Emperor—proclaiming the constitution of 1791 at Toulon—and taking possession of Martinique for the King of Great Britain. What has been the consequence of this want of object? You have converted France into an armed nation—you have given to her Rulers the means of marshalling all the strength of the kingdom against you. The royalists in France also so little understood your intentions, that they did not join you; and the reason is obvious—they did not know whether you were at war for the purpose of re-establishing the ancient Monarchy of France, or for the purpose of aggrandizing yourselves by robbing France of her territories. It might then have been imagined that we would have endeavoured to conciliate the body of constitutionalists.—No such thing.—We had acted so as to give the impression that we were desirous to shew our enmity towards that body of men. Monsieur de la Fayette, who deserved the praise of being a man of the most uncorrupted nature, who had the merit of steering between the two extremes of the parties that agitated this country;

the firm, brave, and steady friend of his Sovereign,—this gallant and distinguished gentleman, equally the friend of his King and his country, emigrated after his death. Upon neutral ground he was seized by certain robbers in the service of the King of Prussia; he was kept by that Monarch for years in prisons and dungeons.—It might have been thought, if you had been desirous to conciliate this body of men, whose constitution you announced at Toulon, that you would at least have made a point of procuring the enlargement of this most estimable character. It might have been thought, that in return for an enormous subsidy, the King of Prussia could not hesitate at the enlargement of one prisoner. But when a motion was made by his right honourable friend (General Fitzpatrick) it was said that it was impossible for this Government to interfere. He is delivered from the King of Prussia, on his recognition of the French, to the Emperor, because, he said, he belonged to the Allies generally, and by him he is kept in the same scandalous and inhuman bondage. From this dreadful captivity he endeavours to escape—a circumstance not very surprising: he is taken and sent back to his prison, to experience more rigorous treatment. At length Madame la Fayette, after enduring a series of most dreadful suffering under the brutal Robespierre, from which she escaped by miracle, flew, on the wings of duty and affection, to Vienna, to solicit the Emperor for permission, at least, to give to her husband the consolation of her attentions in his prison. The Emperor gave her leave. On her arrival at Olmutz, the officer, who had the care of M. de la Fayette, told her with openness and candour, that if she resolved to go down to the dungeon to her husband, she must resolve to submit to share in all the horrors of his captivity [a burst of indignation and sorrow broke from every part of the House]. This, however, had no terror to the constancy of her affectionate heart: she plunged into his dungeon, and there she now lies with him, living, and yet buried, victims of this inhuman power. Nay, this is not all; she applied for leave to have a female attendant, instead of a male, about her person: this, she said, even the implacable Robespierre had not denied her; but even this request was cruelly refused to her. As if it were not enough that our Ministers had not interfered for the deliverance of this gentleman, and for fear that it should be misunderstood that they did not participate in the measure, Mr. Alexander Lameth, one of the three persons who retired from France along with M. de la Fayette, had, after a most cruel confinement, come to this country to take the benefit of the Bath waters. He had also been confined in the prisons of Prussia; but his health having fallen a sacrifice, the King yielded to the solicitation of his mother, and



had permitted him to have a certain period of relaxation, and, having afterwards made his separate peace with France, was easily persuaded to give him liberty. This gentleman, then, who had so greatly distinguished himself as the friend of his King and country—who had only been desirous to establish a limited monarchy, and who had fallen a sacrifice in his native land to his endeavours to prevent the violences and injustice which have unhappily been committed, fought to re-establish his health in this country. He had not been here a single fortnight, the greatest part of which he spent in his bed, until he was ordered to quit the kingdom; and to every representation of the alarming state of his health, and the impropriety of his being put on board any other than a neutral vessel, very little attention was paid, and he was hurried away, to the danger of his being carried into Calais, and conducted to the Guillotine. What could be more injurious to the country than such conduct? Any person, who had seen Mr. Lameth with the broken and decayed constitution, would not have conceived that he was in a state to be dangerous to the Government. Good God! (exclaimed Mr. Fox) M. Lameth an object of terror to the British Government!—An object of terror no otherwise than of moral terror, which his sufferings might excite, as exhibiting a dreadful example of the justice of what are termed regular governments—of the implacable temper of political animosity, and of that severe vengeance, which jealous and offended power exercises on its unresisting victims! And thus this gentleman, who had justly rendered himself dear to all who loved rational liberty, and to whom the Emigrant Nobility of France owed such obligations, was driven from England.

Thus it appears that it is not to Loyalists of every description that favour is to be shewn; it is not to those who take up arms in favour of the limited monarchy, which it was the pretended object of the Allies, and of this country in particular, to establish, but those only whose endeavours aim at the restoration of the ancient tyranny, who are the friends of the old feudal system; those are the only Royalists whose loyalty is entitled to support. What is such conduct likely to produce in the minds of those whose aim is the restoration of the limited monarchy, but to prevent their exertions in the cause of the confederacy; when it is so palpable, by the treatment of those whose sentiments are congenial to their own, that the efforts of the Allies are not directed to the restoration of that limited form of government, which it is their object to establish; but to bring about that system of absolute slavery, which they, in common with their countrymen, originally took up arms to subvert? With

respect to the treatment of General Dumourier, though I do not mean to place him exactly in the same point of view as the two gentlemen I have just mentioned, yet the behaviour of the Allies towards him has not been less impolitic ; for, certainly to afford an asylum, and offer our protection, to these men who, disgusted with the party whom they served, withdrew their assistance, was the only effectual way to encourage others to follow their example. It is said that the legitimate object of Great Britain, in this war, was to obtain from France a just and honourable peace, and that this was the object of the Allies. Why, then, was not that object attempted, when the Confederacy existed in its full power ? Why were two of the powers (Prussia and Spain) suffered to melt away, and their aid to be withdrawn from the general cause, without making any overtures for such a peace ? You may say it was not your fault, that you could not foresee their secession ; but let me observe, when Statesmen take upon themselves to form alliances with other powers, they should know something of the characters of the Princes with whom they make such alliances, and how far it is probable they will keep to the letter of their engagements. As to the King of Prussia, there was every reason to suppose, a long time before the event took place, that he would make peace with France ; that it was his interest so to do : and with respect to Spain, it was apparent to the most short-sighted statesman, that her Ministers could not protract the conclusion of a peace with the victorious Republic, without endangering the existence of the Spanish Monarchy itself. It was therefore an incumbent duty on Ministers to have foreseen the probable consequences of their alliances ; if they had possessed any of that necessary foresight, they would, during the last session of Parliament, have used their endeavours to have procured a peace, while the Confederacy was acting in concert, and not have waited till that Confederacy was dissolved. It is alledged, that the form of Government in France was not such as to enable Ministers to treat for peace upon any sure foundation. I, however, am one of those who think that the Government, so far as respected external relations, was of no consequence to the contracting parties. If an absolute government is, as it is thought to be, the best to enter into engagements with, surely no one will deny but France was an absolute government during the tyranny of Robespierre, as well as during the reign of the prior and succeeding factions. The acts of these factions were never afterwards revived, with respect to external relations. But, you say, you must wait till there is a regular constitution established. Is that the most proper time to retrieve your losses by negotiation, when they have settled themselves in a

permanent government, ascertained the limits and boundaries of their conquests, made the whole subject to their general laws, and communicated to your territory every inherent quality of their own Departments? We were told, several years ago, that the French were reduced to such extremity, that they could not possibly find resources to enable them to continue the contest much longer; and it was only last session it was asserted, with the utmost degree of confidence, that they were not upon the verge, but in the actual gulf, of bankruptcy,—that they were in the last agony. A twelvemonth has now elapsed since they have been in that agony—and really it is the first time I ever heard of any set of people continuing so long in agony. I certainly must admit, that last year, while France was labouring under this agony, that the Emperor, with the assistance of this country, was enabled to regain part of his dominions which had been conquered, and this was looked upon as an accomplishment of the prediction, that the French were reduced to the last extremity, and that they were not in a capacity ever to recover themselves.—It would naturally have been expected, that death would have been the consequence of this agony; but was that the case?—Far from it.—The events of the last three weeks have been of a nature sufficient to prove that their agonizing struggles may in the end destroy their enemies, and draw them into that gulf of ruin, in which they had flattered themselves the French had been irrevocably buried.—The state of the French finances has been another argument to prove their inability to continue the war. God forbid, that the finances of this country should ever be so involved! But the French have now got over the worst consequences resulting from the state of their finances; France has been placed in that situation, wherein it has been necessary to call forth all the property of the country, in order to maintain the quarrel. Without recurring to the mode of argument which was made use of yesterday, with respect to the new mode of taxing capital, I hope, if ever we should be in the situation of the French, that we should not hesitate to expend the whole capital of the country. Rather than have a constitution imposed upon us by a foreign enemy, I had rather all should be taken away by the calamities of the present war, and adopt the language of a gentleman opposite to me—"Perish our Commerce!"—I had rather that we should be forced to submit to one, two, three, or four requisitions of all the adults in the kingdom; all this, though sorry I should be to witness it, I would rather submit to, than that my country should experience the misery of absolute servitude. You have reduced France to the situation of absolute bankruptcy; but that bankruptcy is past, and now they have the whole resources of

the country to bring forth against you. It is now twelve months since we conceived them in such a state of bankruptcy, as to be incapable of resistance. It was the boast of Austria, that she had recovered her losses; but we see the campaign open this year with such gigantic efforts on the part of the French, as to leave no room to hope that we can ever be able to resist them. At the commencement of the present session, His Majesty, in his speech from the throne, intimated a disposition to negotiate, and more fully manifested that disposition in his message of the 8th of December. Why did they not make the attempt at that time (the winter), which was peculiarly favourable for such a measure, as the campaign could not well be opened for some months? Instead of this, we find that the first step taken was on the 8th of March, three months after the communication of the earnest desire for peace contained in the King's message; and four months after the same sentiments had been avowed in his speech from the throne.

This delay has not been occasioned by a wish to consult with our allies, and obtain their concurrence, for it does not appear that they sanctioned or disapproved it. An allusion was made to them in Mr. Wickham's letter; but in order to justify the delay, the application should have been made in the name of them all, and some specific terms should have been offered. This was not the case. Mr. Wickham's letter was such, as might have been agreed upon in a quarter of an hour, instead of three months. But this letter, after all, expressed nothing more than was contained in the King's speech, and cannot be produced as a new proof of the desire of Ministers for peace. It has been said in this House, and His Majesty's Ministers have particularly supported the opinion, that the contagion of French principles is highly dangerous to this country; those principles and their supporters in France, have been treated in this House with every mark of insult and contempt, have been branded with every expression of disgrace and detestation. The first thing Ministers should have done, was to remove the unfavourable impression, the hostile disposition which their language and conduct must have created; and the first step towards accomplishing this, was a full and unequivocal recognition of the French Republic. Towards the conclusion of the American war, some gentlemen in this House thought an acknowledgment of the independence of America should be made the price of peace. I always thought otherwise, and that it ought to be made freely and gratuitously. But whether I was right or not, the present is a question materially different. We have no claim on France, like that which we had on America, and therefore the less would have been the sacri-

fice in recognizing the Republic. But so far from doing this, Mr. Wickham's note does not even hint at the terms that would be acceptable. This reserve may in some cases be prudent and wise. In the present case I see neither prudence nor wisdom. Instead of either recognition or offers, you tell the Directory that your Minister is not empowered even to negotiate. To argue this point fairly, I must put myself in the situation of the enemy, and here I must ask, what can I think of such a communication from Ministers, who for several years have traduced the principles and Government in France, and reviled all the ruling men in that country; from Ministers who delayed that communication for three months? I could not believe the sincerity of their offers. It is not regular to mention what has passed in former debates; but, if I may be permitted to allude to the arguments advanced a few evenings ago, upon the subject of the King of Sardinia's subsidy, we shall find a full illustration of the Minister's motives, in making the pretended offers of peace through Mr. Wickham. On that occasion, it was said, that it was by no means certain, that the overtures of His Sardinian Majesty were made with the view of obtaining peace. It was most probable, that they were made in consequence of the pressure of circumstances, and that all his object was to know, what were the conditions on which the French would consent to a pacification; for he had no real intention of putting an end to the war. I cannot conceive more happy expressions to explain the views of His Majesty's Ministers, in making overtures through Mr. Wickham. They were no doubt actuated by the same motives that guided his Sardinian Majesty, and the French might well suppose that their pretended offers were produced by the pressure of circumstances, and made with the view rather of protracting than concluding the war. The pretence set up by the French, that they could not give up any territories which had been consolidated with the Republic, is, indeed, a matter of regret, but it is a circumstance that doubles my indignation against those Ministers who have brought us into this lamentable situation, who have deserted any proposition for peace till a period when the difficulties are such, that there is no prospect of obtaining it on safe and honourable terms. I see great triumph on the other side of the House, and I do not wonder at the occasion. Their object was, to delay overtures of peace till they could not be accepted, and they have succeeded. This may be a manœuvre in war, but it is not an act of which a Minister, sincerely desirous of peace, can boast. That it was such manœuvre, I am convinced, by the eagerness and consultation with which the correspondence has been published.

there no better means of making the Government of France believe the sincerity of your wishes for peace? Why is it not considered how other treaties have been made? Why not make your disposition for peace known by various other channels than an open negotiation? And above all, why not recognize the Republic, and renounce any design against it on account of the principles on which it was founded? When that great man, the late Lord Chatham, was consulted respecting the best mode of terminating the unfortunate dispute with America, did he send to know what were the terms demanded by the Americans?—No: his opinion was, that nothing would effect a complete conciliation, but a complete change in His Majesty's Councils. —[*A laugh on the Treasury Bench.*]—Gentlemen may laugh, but I do not understand how the calamities of the people, brought on by the present Councils of His Majesty, can be a subject of merriment. To remove these calamities, a total change, not only in the Councils of His Majesty, but in his Counsellors, is absolutely necessary; for to suppose, after their recent conduct, that they will abandon these principles of action which have brought on us so many misfortunes, is absurd. They have not in any way manifested such a change. The Administration which conducted the American war, was found unfit to settle the peace; and yet Lord North, of whom as a private man I never can speak but with respect and esteem, had a most conciliating disposition, and never was considered to be personally anxious to establish our dominion over America; neither had he spoken with so much acrimony of our enemies as has lately been the case. He might have treated with more advantage than our present Ministers, and yet it was found necessary that he should resign.

The change of feeling towards the French must have been very sudden in the right honourable gentleman, for at the time he was making pacific professions, he was sending an expedition to the coast of France, which if it had succeeded, would have compelled him to declare Louis XVIII. King. Had the island of Noirmoutier been taken in the name of Louis XVIII. in whose name it was summoned by a British officer, how could Ministers have recognized the Republic? It appeared, then, that their conversion is very sudden, and sudden conversions are very suspicious. It is but too manifest that they never were sincerely desirous of negotiating a peace with the French Republic. They might, indeed, draw up a paper with the ingenuity of special pleaders, that might serve as a declaration in a court of law, but which from its ambiguous mode of expression, could not satisfy a more liberal judgement of the sincerity of their wishes for peace. I do not wish to visit the sins of the

father upon the son; I do not wish that the descendants of the House of Bourbon should be treated in the manner in which they treated the unfortunate House of Stuart; but if your pacific offers were sincere, you should have disowned Louis XVIII. as King of France. You should have recalled Lord Macartney, who was sent as ambassador to him, and avowed that you made war on France as a Republic, and consequently that you recognized it as such. It would have been a becoming act of justice in you to have declared this to Louis XVIII.; and it would have been an act of prudence to yourselves, with a view of convincing the Directory of the sincerity of the change in your sentiments; it would have freed the unfortunate emigrants from all farther suspense respecting their fate, and would have convinced the French Government of your actual solicitude for peace. And here I will beg pardon of the House, for entering into a short digression on the double dealing that has been used towards the unfortunate emigrants from France, and will observe that it is a most consoling circumstance to me, that not one of them owes the smallest atom of his misfortunes to any thing I ever did or said. It was natural that those unhappy men, when they heard that the estates of Englishmen were insecure, unless the estates of the emigrants were restored; when they heard that we could not make peace with the Republicans, without laying the head of our Sovereign on the block; when they heard that Great Britain was fighting for her very existence; it was natural for them to say, we may safely risk ourselves in the same bark that carries *Cæsar*; we may venture our fortunes along with that of the British Empire. With these opinions, which they imbibed from speeches delivered in this House, the Royalists had been drawn from all parts of France, fully persuaded they would be cordially received here.—But how had they been duped with ambiguous declarations, made purposely to deceive them into an idea that they were to fight for the restoration of the French Monarchy, and of their own property; when, in fact, they were only set on to fight for the fluctuating views of Ministers, who never regarded their personal welfare, or the cause they wished to support, as an object of real importance. In this manner many of the emigrants had been seduced to their ruin, and it would be but an act of justice to tell them we are not now fighting for the restoration of the French Monarchy, we are not now fighting for the restoration of your property—our only object now is, to regain the territories we have lost—we fight only about the conditions of peace. The question now is, whether Ministers have really changed their sentiments respecting the origin and objects of the war. If they have, they should prove it by some unequivocal



cal act or declaration. If they have not, as I suspect is the case, then this House should entreat His Majesty to change his Councils. I know it will be said, "what! you have been speaking three hours, and all for the purpose of procuring a change of Ministers, because such a change might be advantageous to yourself."—To this I only can answer, that I never will take a part in the Government, till the principles upon which the present war has been made, till the principles upon which our domestic politics have been conducted during its continuance, have been completely renounced and abandoned; for it is to them that we must trace the source of all the evils with which we are now afflicted. No Minister who commenced and carried on a war, ever made an advantageous peace; but if the present Ministers expect to prove an exception to this rule, they should shew that they are seriously convinced of their past errors; they should renounce the principles on which they have acted, before they can hope to put an end, with honour and safety, to a war which they have conducted with so much rancour and with so little success. It has been said, let us persevere a little longer, and we shall ultimately succeed; mandates are as much depreciated now, as assignats were formerly, France cannot therefore continue the contest. In answer to this I will only say, look at the effects of the war upon ourselves, and consider well how long we shall be enabled to carry it on. Between fifty and sixty thousand men have already been sent to the West Indies; the mortality has been great among them, and the advantages comparatively trifling, for if we have taken Martinique—St. Vincent's and Grenada are laid waste. The Dutch possessions, it is supposed, will form our chief indemnification at the peace. I will say little as to the fairness of taking these from a nation, to preserve the territory of which we professedly went to war. I am told, Ministers do not now wish the Stadtholder to be restored; but I will only remark, that our extensive colonies in different quarters are already a great incumbrance to us in time of war; they exhaust our strength, and if our maritime force shall ever be equally opposed by a hostile power, their possession will be very precarious. We have completely failed in all the objects for which the war was commenced. Holland is lost, the King of France exiled, and the aggrandizement and power of the French Republic is more alarming than ever. Of our allies, the King of Prussia, who was the first to treat with the French, has sustained the least injury; the King of Spain has been forced to make peace, in order to save his dominions; and the King of Sardinia is now in the same predicament, compelled, for his own safety, to accept such terms as the Directory may chuse to grant.

The fate of this Monarch, whose good faith was so loudly extolled in a late debate, who was termed the very pattern of fidelity, most forcibly and unequivocally demonstrates, *that in proportion as every ally of this country, in the present contest, has been a pattern of fidelity, he has also been an example of misfortune.* The Empress of Russia has indeed suffered nothing. It is impossible not to see, that her only object in the alliance, was to plunder Poland; in which she has been collaterally supported by England. This is a mortal blow to another professed object of the war, the balance of power. Will any man believe that the avowed object of the partition, the destruction of Jacobinism in Poland, was the real cause of dividing that unfortunate country? And will any man contend that England and France united, might not have prevented that transaction, and by that means preserved the balance of power in Europe? But Poland was abandoned to its fate, suffered to be sacrificed, annihilated, destroyed, for the sake of those absurd and vicious principles, which govern the policy of Ministers, and which have involved us in the present war. These principles must now be deserted. If the country is to be saved, we must retrace our steps; that is the only course which presents any hope of an effectual cure for the evil. All other remedies are mere palliatives, which must rather prove mischievous than useful, and I shall therefore recommend a complete change of system. Mr. Fox concluded a speech which lasted nearly four hours by moving the following address:

That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, most humbly to offer to his Royal consideration that judgement which his faithful Commons have formed, and now deem it their duty to declare, concerning the conduct of his Ministers in the commencement, and during the progress, of the present unfortunate war. As long as it was possible for us to doubt from what source the national distresses had arisen, we have, in times of difficulty and peril, thought ourselves bound to strengthen His Majesty's Government, for the protection of his subjects, by our confidence and support: but our duties, as His Majesty's counsellors, and as the representatives of his people, will no longer permit us to dissemble our deliberate and determined opinion, that the distress, difficulty, and peril, to which this country is now subjected, have arisen from the misconduct of the King's Ministers; and are likely to subsist, and to increase, as long as the same principles, which have hitherto guided these Ministers, shall continue to prevail in the counsels of Great Britain.

It is painful to us to remind His Majesty of the situation of his dominions at the beginning of this war, and of the high degree of prosperity to which the skill and industry of his subjects had, under the safeguard of a free Constitution, raised the British empire, since it can only fill his mind with the melancholy recollection of prosperity abused, and of opportunities of securing permanent advantages wantonly rejected. Nor shall we presume to wound His Majesty's benevolence by dwelling on the unfortunate consequences which might have arisen from the mediation

of Great Britain between the powers then at war, which might have ensured the permanence of our prosperity. while it preserved all Europe from the calamities which it has since endured, a mediation which this kingdom was so well fitted to carry on with vigor and dignity by its power, its character, and the nature of its Government, happily removed at an equal distance from the contending extremes of licentiousness and tyranny.

From this neutral and impartial system of policy, His Majesty's Ministers were induced to depart, by certain measures of the French Government, of which they complained as injurious and hostile to this country. With what justice these complaints were made, we are not now called upon to determine, since it cannot be pretended that the measures of France were of such a nature as to preclude the possibility of adjustment by negotiation; and it is impossible to deny that the power which shuts up the channel of accommodation must ever be the real aggressor in war. To reject negotiation is to determine on hostilities, and, whatever may have been the nature of the points in question between us and France, we cannot but pronounce the refusal of such an authorized communication with that country, as might have amicably terminated the dispute, to be the true and immediate cause of the rupture which followed. Nor can we forbear to remark, that the pretences, under which His Majesty's Ministers then haughtily refused such authorized communication, have been sufficiently exposed, by their own conduct, in since submitting to a similar intercourse with the same Government.

The misguided policy, which thus rendered the war inevitable, appears to have actuated the Ministers in their determination to continue it at all hazards. At the same time we cannot but observe, that the obstinacy with which they have adhered to their desperate system is not more remarkable than their versatility in the pretexts upon which they have justified it. At one period the strength, at another the weakness, of the enemy, have been urged as motives for continuing the war: The successes as well as defeats of the allies have contributed only to prolong the contest; and hope and despair have equally served to involve us still deeper in the horrors of war, and to entail upon us an endless train of calamities.

After the original, professed, objects had been obtained, by the expulsion of the French armies from the territories of Holland and the Austrian Netherlands, we find His Majesty's Ministers influenced either by arrogance or by insatuated ambition and vain hope of conquests, which, if realized, could never compensate to the nation for the blood and treasure by which they must be obtained; rejecting, unheard, the overtures made by the executive council of France, at a period when the circumstances were so eminently favourable to His Majesty and his allies, that there is every reason to suppose that a negotiation, commenced at such a juncture, must have terminated in an honourable and advantageous peace. To the prospects arising from such an opportunity they preferred a blind and obstinate perseverance in a war, which could scarce have any remaining object but the unjustifiable purpose of imposing upon France a Government disapproved of by the inhabitants of that country. And such was the insatiation of these Ministers, that, far from being able to frame a wise and comprehensive system of policy, they even rejected the few advantages that belonged to their own unfortunate scheme: the general existence of a design to interpose in the internal Government of France was too manifest not to rouse into a fierce hostility the national zeal of that people; but their particular projects were too equivocal to

attract the confidence, or procure the co-operation, of those Frenchmen who were disaffected to the then Government of their country. The nature of these plans was too clear not to provoke formidable enemies, but their extent was too ambiguous to conciliate useful friends.

We beg leave farther to represent to Your Majesty, that at subsequent periods, your Ministers have suffered the most favourable opportunities to escape of obtaining an honourable and advantageous pacification: they did not avail themselves, as it was their duty to have done, of the unbroken strength of the great confederacy which had been formed against France for the purpose of giving effect to overtures for negotiation: they saw the secession of several powerful States from that confederacy; they suffered it to dissolve without an effort for the attainment of a general pacification: they loaded their country with the odium of having engaged with the most questionable views, without availing themselves of that combination for procuring favourable conditions of peace. That, from this fatal neglect, the progress of hostilities has only served to establish the evils which might certainly have been avoided by negotiation, but which are now confirmed by the events of the war. We have felt that the unjustifiable and impracticable attempts to establish Royalty in France, by force, has only proved fatal to its unfortunate supporters. We have seen, with regret, the subjugation of Holland and the aggrandisement of the French Republic; and we have to lament the alteration in the state of Europe, not only from the successes of the French, but from the formidable acquisition of some of the allied powers on the side of Poland; acquisitions alarming from their magnitude, but still more so from the manner in which they have been made: so fatally has this war operated to destroy, in every part of Europe, that balance of power for the support of which it was undertaken, and to extend those evils which it was its professed object to avert.

Most cordially, therefore, did we assure His Majesty, that his faithful Commons heard, with the sincerest satisfaction, His Majesty's most gracious message of the 8th of December, wherein His Majesty acquaints them that the crisis, which was depending at the commencement of the present session, had led to such an order of things as would induce His Majesty to meet any disposition to negotiation, on the part of the enemy, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect, and to conclude a general treaty of peace whenever it could be effected on just and suitable terms for himself and his allies. That from this gracious communication, they were led to hope for a speedy determination to this most disastrous contest; but that, with surprise and sorrow, they have now reason to apprehend that three months were suffered to elapse before any steps were taken towards a negotiation, or any overtures made by His Majesty's servants.

With equal surprise and concern they have observed, when a fair and open conduct was so peculiarly incumbent on His Majesty's Ministers, considering the prejudices and suspicions which their previous conduct must have excited in the minds of the French, that, instead of acting in that open and manly manner which became the wisdom, the character, and dignity, of the British nation, they adopted a mode of proceeding calculated rather to excite suspicion than to inspire confidence in the enemy. Every expression which might be construed into an acknowledgement of the French Republic, or even an allusion to its forms, was studiously avoided; and the Minister, through whom this overture was made, was in a most unprecedented manner instructed to declare,

that he had no authority to enter into any negotiation or discussion relative to the objects of the proposed treaty.

That it is with pain we reflect, that the alacrity of His Majesty's Ministers in apparently breaking off this negotiation, as well as the strange and unusual manner in which it was announced to the Ministers of the various powers of Europe, affords a very unfavourable comment on their reluctance in entering upon it, and is calculated to make the most injurious impression, respecting their sincerity, on the people of France.

On a review of so many instances of gross and flagrant misconduct, proceeding from the same pernicious principles, and directed with incorrigible obstinacy to the same mischievous ends, we deem ourselves bound in duty to His Majesty, and to our constituents, to declare, that we see no rational hope of redeeming the affairs of the kingdom, but by the adoption of a system radically and fundamentally different from that which has produced our present calamities.

Until His Majesty's Ministers shall, from a real conviction of past errors, appear inclined to regulate their conduct upon such a system, we can neither give any credit to the sincerity of their professions of a wish for peace, nor repose any confidence in their capacity for conducting a negotiation to a prosperous issue. Odious as they are to an enemy, who must still believe them secretly to cherish those unprincipled and chimerical projects, which they have been compelled in public to disavow, contemptible in the eyes of all Europe, from the display of insincerity and incapacity which has marked their conduct, our only hopes rest on His Majesty's royal wisdom and unquestioned affection for his people; that he will be graciously pleased to adopt maxims of policy more suited to the circumstances of the times than those by which His Ministers appear to have been governed, and to direct his servants to take measures, which, by differing essentially, as well in their tendency as in the principle upon which they are founded, from those which have hitherto marked their conduct, may give this country some reasonable hope, at no very distant period, of the establishment of a peace, suitable to the interests of Great Britain, and likely to preserve the tranquillity of Europe.

It passed in the negative.

Mr. Chancellor-PITT. In commencing a very eloquent and comprehensive speech, the right honourable gentleman dwelt rather more at length than at first was obviously necessary, on a proposition in itself sufficiently evident, and which certainly needed not to be enforced by the brilliant rhetoric and great authority of that illustrious orator of antiquity, whose name he thought proper to quote on the occasion. The proposition was, that at certain periods it may be useful to take a review of past events, in order to apply to our present situation the lessons of experience, to examine the sources of former errors, and to trace the causes of those calamities under which the country may suffer, in order to obviate future misconduct, and, if possible, to procure redress for existing evils: That such a retrospect may, in most cases, be wise and salutary, is a proposition which will hardly be denied. It is evident that an

appeal to experience is the best guard to future conduct, and that it may be necessary to probe the nature of the misfortune, in order to apply a suitable remedy. But I shall not take up the time of the House in discussing a point so obviously true, and so universally acknowledged. I feel the less inclination to detain their attention, as I contend that this proposition, which is so true in general, does not apply to the particular state of the country. There are some situations in which a wide and very ample survey of past events may, perhaps, better be spared, particularly at a moment when the honour and interests of the nation demand the united concurrence of every friend to the country in the same object, and point out only one line of conduct which can consistently be pursued. Whatever may be the difference of opinions with respect to the origin and conduct of the war, whatever may be the events which have occurred during its progress, or the pressure of the calamities it has occasioned, under our present circumstances, compelled as we are to continue the war by the ambition and obstinacy of the enemy, left without the option of a safe and honourable retreat, a mere appeal to past events can neither be necessary or proper, and even prudence demands from us to dismiss all retrospect, in order to look to the means of future exertion, and the prospect of probable success. The right honourable gentleman, in the commencement of his speech, alluded to the new situation which has arisen with respect to the war, and which, I contend, renders its continuance no longer a matter of choice, but of necessity. But if he consumed so much time in proving the necessity of a retrospect, so much time in the retrospect itself, and so little on that new situation in which the country is placed; if, on the former topics he had recourse to a detached and elaborate argument, while he so slightly touched on the point of more immediate interest, and pressing urgency, it is because he felt that he must disappoint the public in withholding his opinion in the present crisis, after the declaration of those sentiments which he has repeatedly uttered. If by the refusal of the enemy to accede to fair and honourable terms of peace, that period is now arrived, which he formerly declared would secure his cordial support to the continuance of the war—that period which, by exhibiting in the strongest light the unjust policy and unreasonable ambition of the enemy, he then pronounced would undoubtedly have the effect to unite all England, and to divide all France, he would have better fulfilled the pledge which he solemnly gave to the public, by admitting the necessity and justice of prosecuting the war under these circumstances, than by occupying a wide field of general reasoning, and entering into minute historical detail of past

events. In that case however he might have lamented past misconduct, however he might have retained former differences of opinion, consistent with his duty as a Member of Parliament, and his feelings as an Englishman, he must have admitted the necessity of manly perseverance, and of vigorous exertion, if he wished to remain true to the country and just to his own principles. The right honourable gentleman, however, has thought fit studiously to avoid giving any opinion on the conduct of the enemy, or advert- ing to that new situation in which the country is placed by the recent communication.—Under that protest that the time which the right honourable gentleman has chosen for retrospect is that precise period when retrospect might have been most conveniently spared, because we have now no option between war and peace, because we are now called upon not to decide on the past, but to act for the future. I shall not enter at large into that long historical detail which the right honourable gentleman brought forward, because I shall feel it to be my duty more particularly to call your attention to that part of the subject which he omitted—the situation in which the country at present stands, and the points now at issue between you and the enemy. Under this protest, however, I have no objection to follow the right honourable gentleman thro' the leading points of his retrospect, and for the sake of greater perspicuity I shall reduce them to distinct heads, in the order in which they bear on that practical conclusion he evidently meant to draw from the whole of his statement. The points on which he chiefly insisted, and to which he seemed desirous to compel your concurrence, come under the following head: First, that you should submit to a retraction of your past errors, and confess that you had made an unjust aggression in a contest which you formerly declared to have originated in the unprincipled policy and insolent ambition of the enemy, and which was rendered necessary on your part for your own self-preservation, and the security of your dearest interests.

Secondly, That you should admit that the cause of the war, as you undertook it, was the restoration of Monarchy in France. Thirdly, That during the progress of hostilities, many better opportunities have occurred for restoring tranquillity, and much more favourable terms might have been had, than can now be hoped for. Fourthly, That you should be prepared to state, that your resources are now exhausted, and that all hope from the adoption of vigorous measures ought to be abandoned. Fifthly, That you should allow, that from your former conduct, and repeated declarations, the enemy are fully justified in their distrust



of your sincerity with regard to peace, and that, on that ground, their answer to a late communication is strictly defensible. These were the leading points on which the right honourable gentleman insisted, stated very generally as specific propositions; but in arguing which, he went into long details filled up with a great deal of rich and glowing colouring. First, I must remark, that the right honourable gentleman, who wished by the declaration which he proposed, that Ministers should acknowledge all past errors, at the same time must have forgotten that he was also calling upon the House to rescind all the decisions which they had come to in the course of four years.—His Majesty's Ministers were accused of having plunged the nation unnecessarily in a most bloody and expensive war, a charge in which Parliament was implicated, because they had, upon the most mature consideration, declared that they considered the present to be a just and necessary war.

The right honourable gentleman had not, upon this occasion, trusted to his usual arguments to prove that we were in fact the aggressors in this war; but he laid his ground much higher, and attempted to prove, *a priori*, that the war on our part was unjust. There was something singular in the mode in which this point was argued; he had endeavoured to prove the war was unjust on our part, because it was unexpected; and to prove that it was unexpected, he goes back to 1792, and refers to a speech made by me on the opening of the Budget for that year, which he describes as having been uttered in a tone of great satisfaction, triumph, and exultation. It is true, indeed, that I felt much satisfaction in exhibiting to the country the high degree of prosperity to which it had then reached: not less satisfaction, I am sure, than the right honourable gentleman seems to feel in giving them the melancholy picture that he has now drawn of its present reduced situation; and I felt the more vivid satisfaction in viewing that prosperity, as it enabled us to prepare for, and enter into, a contest of a nature altogether unprecedented. But I must remark as a singular circumstance, now that period of prosperity is over, the right honourable gentleman dwells on the retrospect rather rapturously, though it seemed but little to affect him at the time it was enjoyed. In bringing forward that budget he remarks, that I held out a prospect of fifteen years peace, and afterwards seems to attach a degree of insincerity to the declarations of Ministers on that subject. What can countenance such an accusation, I am much at a loss to discover. For at the periods alluded to, every motive of public duty, every consideration of personal ease, must have induced me to exert the best of my endeavours to promote a

peace, by which alone I could be enabled to effect the favourable objects I had in view, of redeeming the public debt and the 4 per cents, as alluded to by the right honourable gentleman. No stronger proof could be given of the sincerity of Government to promote and insure peace, than was then given by His Majesty's Ministers; and if they were disappointed, the fault is not with them; but their conduct must be understood and justified by the imperious necessity, which in 1793 compelled them to resist an unprovoked aggression. As to the accusations urged against us of not offering our mediation, or even resisting it when solicited, they are equally of little weight. For are Ministers to be blamed, for what it would be hazardous in them to have attempted, namely, to propose a mediation where both parties were not ready to agree? To have erected ourselves into arbitors could only expose us to new difficulties and disputes, if we were determined, as we ought to be, to enforce that mediation on the parties who refused to admit it. And what is the great use which the honourable gentleman seems to be so eager to derive from peace, if it had been so secured? Why that we should go to war in order to prevent the partition of Poland? In general policy I am ready to confess that this partition is unjust; but it does not go, as is said, to overturn the balance of power in Europe, for which the right honourable gentleman, as it suits his argument, expresses greater or less solicitude; for that country being nearly divided equally between three great powers, it can little contribute to the undue aggrandizement of either. But how strange did it seem in that right honourable gentleman, who inveighed so strongly against the partition of Poland, to censure Ministers for their endeavours to prevent the partition of Turkey, and I begged to observe to the House, that it was the establishment of the principle, that this country could not interfere to prevent the partition of Turkey, precluded the possibility of any interference with respect to Poland. Ministers having declined all mediation between the belligerent powers, had forbore to make any remonstrance to the French, or declaration for the preservation of Holland, until after the battle of Jemappe, when Dumourier was overrunning Flanders, and our ally was in imminent danger. It then became necessary to interpose, to prevent that storm bursting upon their heads. As to the latter transactions that have occurred between this country and France, they are too recent and fresh in the memory of the House, to require that I should call their attention to them. The resolutions to which we have come on this subject, are too sacred, the opinion too settled, and too deeply formed, to be lightly reversed.

We cannot, surely, forget the first cause of complaint, allowed to be well founded, and the famous decree of the 19th of November, which was an insult and an outrage on all civilized nations. If any thing could have aggravated the letter of that act, it was the spirit which pervaded it, and the practical circumstances which accompanied it. Seditious men, delegated from this country, with treason in their mouths, and rebellion in their hearts, were received, welcomed, and caressed by the Legislature of France. That Government, without waiting until it had even established itself, declared hostilities against all the old established systems: without having scarcely an existence in itself, it had the presumption to promise to interpose to the destruction of all the existing Governments in the world. All Governments alike felt under its vengeance; the old forms were contemned and reprobated; those which had stood the test of experience, whether monarchy, aristocracy, or mixed democracy, were all to be destroyed. They declared that they would join the rebellious subjects of any state to overturn their Government. The right honourable gentleman contended, that this obnoxious decree of the 19th of November was done away by a subsequent one; but what was the explanation they had given? it was, that they would not interfere in the Government of another country, except they were of opinion that the majority of the country wished for a change of Government. As to their declaration against aggrandizement without stopping to argue a point that was so extremely clear, I will only refer the House to their whole conduct towards Belgium. They declared that they would not interfere in the Government of Belgium, after it had consolidated its liberties;—a strange way of declining interference when a form of constitution was forced on them, bearing the name, but not the stamp of liberty, and compelling the Belgians to consolidate and preserve it. With respect to another cause of the war, viz. the opening of the Scheldt, the right honourable gentleman admitted that to be a very important question; but it appeared to him it might easily have been settled by negotiation. The French proposed it should be settled between Belgium and Holland. That is to say, if we had disarmed, and they had completely fraternized Belgium, that then the question might have been discussed between these two independent States. If upon the different explanations they had given to our causes of complaint, we had declared war against them, we should have been completely justified, because as the right honourable gentleman stated, that it is to those who are the aggressors, and not those who declare war, that blame is really to be imputed. In fact, we did not declare war; but then it was said we did some-

thing equivalent to it—we did not receive Monsieur Chauvelin. He was the representative of the King of France, and as long as that monarch retained any share of authority, so long was Monsieur Chauvelin received here ; but the moment the source from which he derived authority was gone, of course his representative capacity also ceased ; he wished to be received as Minister from the Republic, but he was informed that he could not be received in that capacity. Did the right honourable gentleman think that the British Parliament had acted upon slight grounds—without full examination of the causes which operated on their minds in the commencement of the war ? and were we, in fact, according to his proposal, to arraign ourselves, merely for the purpose of raising the pride of the enemy ?—to bind the cord round our necks, and, throwing ourselves at their feet, with a confession of the exhausted state of our resources, ask them what indemnity they would be pleased to accept for our unjust aggression ? This I contend, would be to renounce the character of Britons. Even if by the adverse fortune of war, we should be driven to sue for peace, I hope we will never be mean enough to acknowledge ourselves guilty of a falsehood and injustice, in order to obtain it. But, however, when that channel of communication was suspended, it was intimated that one of their Generals (Dumourier) wished to have an interview with our Minister at the Hague ; this was acceded to—our Minister received instructions, and a day was appointed ; and in this state of things it was that the French declared war ; therefore there was no alternative left to us either in form or substance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer begged pardon of the House for troubling them with these points ; but when gentlemen thought proper again to revive them, it became his duty to recal the real state of facts to the attention of the House. He came now to the consideration of that part of the right honourable gentleman's speech, in which he contended that we were instrumental in bringing on the war, by refusing to acknowledge the French Republic. This seemed, in the right honourable gentleman's mind, to form one great error in the outset, a kind of original sin, to which all our subsequent calamities were to be attributed. After the allies had been to a certain degree successful, the right honourable gentleman contended that we should have seized that moment to have made peace ; and that our reason for not proposing terms then was, because we entertained the most extravagant hopes of conquest. But, continued the right honourable gentleman, when your arms were unsuccessful, then you would not make peace because the enemy might not grant proper terms ; so that whether we were victorious or unsuccessful, there existed the

same obstacles to peace ; and from the whole, he infers, that Ministers must have had some secret object in view in carrying on the war. But surely the House must feel that different situations require different measures, and inspire different ideas. It was easy for the House to figure to itself situations in which we might look forward with hope, and yet without being extravagant in our expectations ; and other situations in which, though unsuccessful, it would have been cowardly to despair. The right honourable gentleman had fixed the periods at which he was of opinion, that this country might, with propriety, have made a peace ; the first period was, after our advantages in the Spring of 1793 ; but what security had we that the French at that time had given up their plan of destroying all the other Governments of Europe ? a temporary failure of success might have lowered their tone, but it afforded no satisfactory assurance that their principles were abandoned. Ministers did certainly decline all attempt at negotiation then, because they could not do it with security, and the House had confirmed their opinion on that subject. The war was carried on, in which we had met with misfortunes, God knows, severe and bitter—but exclusive of positive acquisitions, had we gained nothing by the change in France since that period ? If we had made peace then, we should have made it before France had lost her trade, before she had exhausted her capital, before her foreign possessions were captured, and her navy destroyed. This was his answer to every part of the right honourable gentleman's speech relative to making peace at those early periods. But a discussion was once more introduced as to the object of the war. Ministers had repeatedly and distinctly stated the object ; but it was a custom on the other side of the House, to take unguarded and warm expressions of individuals in favour of the war, for declarations of Ministers. The right honourable gentleman to whom he had particularly alluded (Mr. Burke), and of whom, with respect to his admirable talents and good intention there could not be any difference ; had stated on an occasion, in support of a single argument, that British property was not safe until the property of French emigrants was restored. The right honourable gentleman, glad at catching every opportunity of fixing Ministers to specific declarations, had thought proper to consider the expression of Mr. Burke, as a declaration on the part of Ministers, that the establishment of the old Government of France was a *sine qua non* object. In his opinion it was impracticable to define in what mode security was to be obtained : it might arise from the change of system in the French, from the destruction of Jacobin principles ; and certainly, for all purposes of negotiation,

the most enviable circumstance would be the establishment of the French monarchy : or it might arise from a commixture of all or any of those means. But whoever formed to himself an ideal notion of that view which should guide him in the process of a war, would be guilty of a presumption equally great—whether he looked to the establishment of monarchy, or some other more objectionable form of Government. The only rational policy must be in all cases to watch the progress of events, and judge whether the circumstances existing at any one time, when accompanied with peace, would be preferable to the risk and inconvenience of the continuance of war ; and with such a view alone did he enter into the contest. In the beginning of the year 1795, the allies had the dawn of a splendid campaign, of a campaign which promised the most brilliant and important victories, and which unhappily terminated, he was sorry to state, in a manner entirely different from the expectation of mankind. It was followed by a series of disasters, the causes of which it was not his province then to analyze ; but disasters and vicissitudes they were, which he had the comfort to add, reflected honour on the national character even in the moment of our disappointment ; disasters which he could not disguise ; conquests by the enemy which could scarcely be numbered, which extended from the mouth of the Rhine almost to its source. Under such circumstances, was it more for the honour of this country—more for the permanent and solid advantage of Great Britain, to withdraw herself from the confederacy ; or, if she was not able to support Holland, at least to save a part of the wreck, for the benefit of the lawful owner, if he should ever be reinstated, or in case that desirable object could not be accomplished, to take it rather as the lawful prize of Great Britain, than to leave it as an accession to the overgrown power of the enemy ? Whether was it better to act as they had done, than to have used that universal remedy for all difficulties, suggested by gentlemen on the other side, the acknowledgement of the French Republic ; a conduct of humiliation which he insisted would have created a general depression from one end of the kingdom to the other. He next came to consider that part of the right honourable gentleman's argument which related to the defection of Spain and Prussia from the confederacy ; and also to consider the charges made against Administration for not endeavouring to negotiate before the dismemberment of the combined powers. The question which would then arise would be, whether such a peace as might then have been obtained would, under all the circumstances, have been preferable to the continuation of the war, with the reduced co-operation of the remainder of the confederacy ? and he

contended that, exhausted as France had been by the powers of the whole confederacy united, there still remained an opposition more effective in prospect than even the whole confederacy had been, before France had been so considerably weakened by the great struggles necessary to keep up so extensive and general a war. Whether the countries which had seceded from the confederacy had benefited by the peace which they had made, was a point by no means incontrovertibly established. First, with respect to Spain, whether she acted upon a just and consistent principle of policy—whether the peace had afforded an equivalent for the considerable sacrifices she made, he would not decide; nor whether, considering the resources of that country, and the spirit which was formerly known to animate the people, they were in such imminent danger as to make it advisable to purchase a peace by such means?—Whether Spain, extending her dominions to all parts of the globe, and deriving such resources from her possessions, was wise in making such a peace as she had concluded with the French Republic, was, as he said, a question which he would not take upon him to decide. But he had little hesitation in deciding as to the degree of advantage which the King of Prussia had derived from deserting the confederacy, and making peace. What, he would ask, had Prussia purchased? he would answer that Prussia had purchased the name and appearance of peace, and a considerable portion of the expences and difficulties of war. A large army was obliged to be constantly kept up to preserve its neutrality; such, he said, was the state in which Prussia had stood ever since the day when the treaty of peace was signed. With respect to the detention of M. la Fayette, as the prisoner of the allies, he would only have to repeat what he had before formally stated, that the Government of this country did not consider itself responsible for any act that had been done with regard to that person. As to the other circumstance, of the Government having sent out of the kingdom M. Lameth, he would only mention that they had, in the exercise of a discretion vested in them by the Legislature, used their best judgement as to the propriety of that act. In the Alien act there was no exception made in favour of any particular class of emigrants, and the House of Commons was not the place in which to investigate the grounds of exercising a power, which in the present case Ministers had reluctantly used. With respect to that Constitutional Government of 1791, or rather he might say of 1789, he would frankly deliver his sentiments.—In his opinion it was not likely to end in any thing permanent, but was more likely to decline into something worse, than to rise into something better. The opinion of His Majesty's Ministers had been, that



monarchy was the most sure ground of attaining the objects of security in the event of a peace; and they did not think themselves justified in carrying the war into France upon any other footing, leaving, however, any modifications with respect to the other branches of the Government to be considered afterwards. The right honourable gentleman censured Ministers for holding out hopes to emigrants, which left them no chance of reconciliation with their country, and he took great credit to himself for not having been accessory to any such delusions; but, when Government was willing to lend its assistance in an endeavour to procure them the restoration of their just rights, and to their country its ancient Government, he was convinced, that if an emigrant gentleman were asked whether he would run the chance of such a disappointment (as the event of Great Britain making peace with the Republic when it became essential to her interest to do so), he would not refuse to exert himself in the common cause, and, at some risk and hazard, endeavour to do justice to himself and to his country.—The declaration proposed by the right honourable gentleman stated, that we could have no hopes of the future, from the former prosecution of the war. What, he would ask, would be the benefit of that declaration? If it were true, it might appear idle to disguise a truth, but did it seem useful to proclaim it? Was it not to tell the enemy how little we had the means of continuing the contest, at a time when they wanted neither prompting nor suggestion? And surely we need not record our weakness, in order to make them know what pretensions they should set up. Therefore he wished the House to consider what practical good such a declaration would be attended with; or whether it was a declaration which a member of that House should make for his constituents. He next came to consider the question of expence: At the same time that he lamented every burden that was laid on the country, the temporary and partial grievances which had been suffered by the people, yet he was not afraid to state it to be his sincere and indisputable opinion, that, if the present war were compared with any former war, in the amount of its expences, the amount of its burdens, the means of providing for them, their impression upon the body of the people, the ease with which they were collected, or their bearing upon the manufactures or the commerce of the country, our situation would in no point of view be found more calamitous and oppressive than at former periods. He trusted he should be able to shew, that great as the burdens were, they were more than compensated by the credit, the character, the commerce, and resources of every description, which had increased in a greater proportion than even our ex-

pences; and notwithstanding the great disadvantage in comparing a year of war with a year of peace, yet if he were to shew England in the most advantageous point of view, with respect to its capital and resources, it would remain a doubt with him, whether he should choose its state in the month of February 1792, when he had opened the budget alluded to, and which the right honourable gentleman considered as a most flourishing æra; or whether he would prefer the actual state in which we stood in the month of May 1796, in point of capital, and in relation to the credit and resources of the country.

The right honourable gentleman also argued from the resources which were still left to the enemy for the prosecution of the war; but if France was yearly wasting a considerable portion of its capital, she must exhaust herself, and probably it will be found not remote from truth, to repeat that she is upon the verge of bankruptcy. It is no argument, that because that which is in a state of decay is not actually dissolved, that therefore its dissolution is not to be expected. He did not proceed upon any statement of his own.—From what the Directory had stated to the National Assembly, they had declared, that if the credit of the mandats was not supported, their resources would fail them; and it was well known that the value of these, which they acknowledged to be their last substitute, was in a rapid state of depreciation. Can it then be possibly admitted in argument, either that the resources of the enemy for carrying on the war are so immense, or that our finances are so exhausted, that this country must necessarily submit to receive the compulsory terms of the enemy; or that, from the knowledge which the enemy have of the state of our resources, they can be induced to persevere in the contest? With regard to what the right honourable gentleman had stated of the recent successes of the enemy in Italy, he could only say, that he knew no more of them than what were stated in their own reports, and in German accounts. In the proceedings of the French Convention, the losses which they had sustained at the close of the last campaign, had been commented upon, and admitted to proceed from the want of money, and the impossibility of finding magazines, horses, or provender; and it is stated, that unless these causes can be remedied, they have not the means of carrying on the war. He must remark, therefore, that the right honourable gentleman had drawn a flattering prospect of the French finances, very different from what the Government in France had done; yet that very Government had stated the extension of the limits of France as just and politic—had declared that it would promote the extension of their navigation, and expressed a

determination to transfer so much from Britain into their own scale of importance ; they do not scruple to affirm that their own exorbitant demands are just and reasonable, and that all their newly-acquired territories ought to be preserved as a compensation for the almost total destruction of their naval power. But, whilst they adopt this boasting language, they discover enough of their real situation to shew that they are destitute of power to enforce their exorbitant demands, if other countries have but sufficient fortitude to resist them. The enemy may, indeed, falsely suppose that they have a right to make such demands, from an idea that their opponents are unable to resist them ; but is it for this House to hold forth such an idea ? and are we, by the motion of this day, called upon to negotiate with France, upon an admission that we are destitute of resources to prosecute the war, and thus be bound hand and foot before the enemy ? He denied that the negotiation proposed with France was accompanied with circumstances that evinced any insincerity. His Majesty's speech, in October, had no view to that negotiation ; nor did either the speech, or the subsequent message to Parliament, contain any pledge that His Majesty would make the first overture towards peace. Government, however, in taking the first step towards pacification, had, in his opinion, acted wisely, although they had gone beyond any pledge that had been given ; and he added, that the communication to France was made with the knowledge and consent of our Allies, although they were not made parties in the overture. But the right honourable gentleman objects, that the note presented by Mr. Wickham contained no recognition of the Republican Government in France ; so fond was he of this idea, that he states this objection for France, which France had not discovered for herself. The answer from the French Directory makes no complaint on that score, nor does it say—" If you will recognize our Government, we will agree to give you better terms than if you do not." Therefore, the want of this recognition could be no reason for rejecting the overtures which had been made to them in the first instance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer denied that it was necessary Mr. Wickham should have been invested with authority to treat with France at the first outset. He observed, that first overtures for negotiation may be made when it may be impossible to give any active share in the negotiation to the person who makes it, as in the case of a Minister of a Neutral Power. Where the object was to bring about a general peace, he pointed out the impropriety of taking any step which might have a tendency to sow the seeds of jealousy and disunion among Allies, or afford them cause to suspect that there was any intention of en-

tering into a separate negociation, as well as the impropriety of giving provisional instructions beforehand to treat, without knowing the disposition of the enemy. He animadverted on the declaration, that the British Ministry proposing a congress was a proof of their insincerity. From historical deduction he shewed, that from the period of the treaty of Munster, scarcely any treaty had been entered upon, in which allies were to be included, without a congress having been appointed. If France disliked the proposition made to her, why did she not, as desired, suggest her own? Had the French Government really thought this Government insincere in their proposition for peace, he asked, if they would have answered it by proposing exorbitant terms, which, upon the supposition of the insincerity of our Government, would most effectually prevent such insincerity being called in question? In short, the only ground on which they founded an objection was, that their constitution would prevent them from giving up any part of their newly-acquired and incorporated possessions; but the right honourable gentleman himself had allowed the danger of such a principle as this; for if once admitted and acted upon, it might for ever shut the door against the return of peace. He avowed his opinion, that the new constitution of France furnished no pretext for such an exorbitant claim as this. Instead, therefore, of inveighing so much against Ministry, he asked why the right honourable gentleman had not levelled some part, at least, of the thunder of his eloquence against that power which alledged such false pretences, and started such insurmountable obstacles against the return of peace? But although the terms, suggested by the French Directory, were such as he was confident a British Parliament never would agree to, he acknowledged this was no reason for acting with petulance or passion, or for testifying reluctance to resume a future negociation, whenever any disposition to this effect might be shewn by the enemy. Till, however, this time arrived, and so long as their present disposition remained, and they avowed their determination to keep all that they had got in Europe, and to recover all that they could out of it, he confessed he could see no alternative but that of acting against the enemy with vigour and perseverance; and he trusted that the late refusal of the French to treat, would produce this effect in the present instance.

Mr. M. ROBINSON said, that to much contained in the speech of a right honourable member (Mr. Fox) he could undoubtedly subscribe—agreeing with him in every thing that related to the misconduct of the war on the part of Government; but having acceded in the justice of its commencement (an opinion he found,

on reflection, he had no reason to depart from, and deriving, from the spirit manifested in the late communications of the French Directory with this country, little hopes of its being determined under its present circumstances in a manner consistent with the honour or security of the British nation) he held himself obliged to vote with the Minister on the question of that night. To render, however, the enemy inexcusable, he asserted, this country had a right to exact from the Minister the withdrawing the Embassy he had sent to the Head of the House of Bourbon,—a measure, which could be construed no otherwise, than as implying insincerity in his proceedings with the Republic of France; and though by no means indifferent to the distresses of a family once eminently illustrious, and unfortunate in proportion to the great reverse of circumstances they had recently experienced, the honourable member was unable to conceive the propriety of employing a Noble Lord, whose talents were rendered useless to his country, by the mockery of this appointment in expeditions so wild and extravagant as that of his present negotiation, or the Embassy which had preceded it to China. Mr. Robinson hoped the Minister would neglect no means of procuring peace to this country, but such a peace as might be deemed honourable and satisfactory, and consequently productive of permanent effect. To terms of insufficiency and degradation, he trusted any man who asserted his right to the name of Englishman, would be found incapable of giving his assent. He had been induced to trouble the House at the late hour he had intruded himself upon it, that by the explanation of the vote he intended to give, he might be enabled to ascertain that consistency of character which ought to be the result of the conduct of every consistent member of that assembly.

Mr. FOX said, that though he felt it somewhat unreasonable now to trespass upon the patience of the House, by claiming the usual privilege of reply; yet, at this period of the session and of the parliament, he was so anxious to have his sentiments fairly understood, that he would avail himself of an indulgence which he would not otherwise have required, and make a few observations on the speech of the right honourable gentleman. At the beginning of his speech the right honourable gentleman seemed to dwell with some degree of triumph upon an imputed inconsistency which he affected to discover in his arguments on a former occasion, when Turkey was endangered by the Empress of Russia, and, in the present instance, with respect to the recent dismemberment of Poland. But was the infamous partition of Poland in any respect to be compared with the circumstances of Turkey at the period alluded to? The Turks, after an unprovoked aggression, were humbled by the power

of the Empress, and he had reprobated the idea of the arrogant interference of this country to prevent her from obtaining that indemnification to which she was entitled. He had said, that if the concurrence of France, in a situation to act with effect could have been obtained, he would have advised our interposition to prevent that horrible injustice, that infamous partition of Poland; a measure which would have been justified by a due regard to the balance of Europe. But the right honourable gentleman seemed to consider the balance of power as very little affected, because the division which took place among the three different states concerned in the transaction was so equal as to preserve that relation of strength which they mutually held to one another. - This argument, upon its own principle, could only be good, if the division had been so exact as to preserve the proportion, not in any three, but in all the states of Europe, by assigning a correspondent share to each. But when a Minister went so far as to overlook the injustice of a few great nations in swallowing up the possessions, and destroying the independence, of the little surrounding states, and to sanction that robbery which Kings might find it so easy to practise, merely because the plunder was equally divided amongst the guilty, there was an end at once of the balance of Europe. But what was the injustice and the infamy of this partition,—how formidable the danger to the balance of Europe, when it was considered that the population of Poland was equal to that of this country, and its natural wealth and resources great and important! It was indeed a terrible principle, which was advanced by the right honourable gentleman, that (no matter for this injustice) the balance of power remains the same, as those states, who have divided the plunder, have maintained in this new accession the proportion of strength they previously held to one another. With regard to what had been called his special pleading on the subject of the communication between the French government and certain societies in this country, he would still ask, how it was possible for us, without acknowledging the French Republic then established, to found any proceedings upon those communications, or to take any offence at the conduct pursued by the French, without referring it to the Government, and stating it as a ground of dissatisfaction? It was certainly true, that he did consider the Minister, in 1792, as sincere in his wish for the continuance of peace. The right honourable gentleman had said, that this confession supported the presumption that Ministers had not gone to war precipitately. What he meant to show, however, was, that the general effects of the revolution in France were not the causes of the war; for, at the time when Ministers expressed pacific inten-

tions and hopes, many of the events, so much insisted upon, had taken place, and he wished to confine the real causes to the three points which he had mentioned. The right honourable gentleman said, that at the beginning of the war the success was such as to justify the hopes they entertained. This was precisely what he had intended to illustrate, that, whether good or bad success occurred, the argument for the continuance of the war derived equal support with Ministers from either event. In the end of 1793, it was said, that proposals for negotiation would have been humiliating, and would have produced an offer of terms, which it would have been disgraceful to accept. But does the right honourable gentleman recollect the language he held, and even announced from the Throne, with regard to the events of 1793, when he said that the campaign had been as brilliant as could have been expected, and equal to the most glorious campaigns of the war of 1763? The support of monarchy in France was justified as a desirable object of policy for the purpose of dividing the French, and as a means of promoting the security of this country. On the first point he presumed to differ, and he considered the support held out by this country to monarchy in France as one of the causes of that union which had prevailed among the French. With regard to security, it was a vague, indefinite object, nor was it easy to know to what it related. He understood, that at the commencement of the war, the establishment of monarchy was left out of the question; nothing but atonement and satisfaction were the topics insisted upon, and it could only be from the existing government that this satisfaction could be obtained, and for which purpose it was also necessary that the Government should be recognized. With regard to La Fayette, he was sorry that the right honourable gentleman, who found himself obliged so often to interfere in continental affairs, on an occasion like this, possessed so little influence; but what could he say with respect to the treatment experienced by Mr. Alexander Lameth in this country? The right honourable gentleman said, that whatever might have been the conduct of Ministers, this House was not the place where he was to give any explanation. He had execrated the bill under which Ministers had acted, on its first introduction, and had foretold the abuses that would be committed, which he now found to be realized. But it was then said, that the bill inferred a responsibility on Ministers for their conduct under it; if so, Ministers had incurred responsibility, and this was the proper place to inquire into the subject. He asked then, for what reason Mr. Alexander Lameth was sent away? That gentleman had been a constitutionalist, many of whom were employed by us, and those



alone were treated with harshness, who would not draw their swords against their native country. If there was any man deserving particular respect and attention, it was the man who had been the zealous assertor of limited monarchy—who had been thrown unjustly into a Prussian dungeon, and his health greatly impaired; and yet was he marked out to Europe as the severest victim of our persecution, and as an example to those who should refuse to fight against their country. It was said, that the effect of the motion was humiliating, but for whom? Not for the country, which he wished to separate from Ministers as much as possible, but for Ministers alone. But it was said, that the war had been approved by Parliament, and sanctioned by repeated votes. But did the right honourable gentleman recollect, in 1782, when the American war drew near a conclusion, that it too had been sanctioned by repeated votes, and supported by very great majorities? In the course of his reading that morning, he found in the works of his friend Mr. Gibbon, an observation, that during that war the sense of the people without doors, which had originally been favourable to it, began to turn; yet the House of Commons followed the change of public opinion, *haud passibus æquis*,—a remark, historical with regard to the past, which might have been prophetic with regard to the present. By submitting his present propositions, he wished to give the people of this country an opportunity of rescuing their character from any share in the guilt which Ministers had incurred. The right honourable gentleman had talked of the derangement of the French finances; but if the right honourable gentleman reasoned from cause to effect, might not he reason from effect to cause, and, from the astonishing vigour and success of the military operations of the French, conclude that their finances either had not been deranged in the degree alledged, or were now re-established? It was said, that no authentic accounts were received of the late successes; but, he believed, little doubt could be entertained of their truth. It was little doubtful that the French had an army of 70,000 men in Italy, and he was persuaded, that when the German accounts, on which the right honourable gentleman relied so much, arrived, the army of the French would probably be stated to be more numerous. It was urged that formerly it had been admitted by Opposition, that if propositions of peace should be made, and not accepted, the effect would be to divide the French, and unite the people of this country. But surely it was understood, when this observation was made, that proposals were to be made in such a way as to have a fair chance of success.

As to what the right honourable gentleman said of Mr. Wickham's

communication, he had made the best defence of the conduct of the French; for was it to be expected that any attention would be paid to a man who had no sanction from the allies with whom we were connected, nor any authority to make specific proposals; or would the right honourable gentleman have caused the correspondence with Mr. Wickham, which was of a private nature, to be published, or have published any private communications that might have been made from the French, had he been serious in his desire of pacification? With regard to terms, certainly some attention should have been paid to the prejudices of the French. If the right honourable gentleman reprobated the conduct of France, in not coming forward with proposals, why did he not avoid the conduct which he considered to be presumptuous in them. There might be reasons of policy which determined the French to adhere in appearance to the principle of annexation of the conquered provinces, as there the war was to be carried on, and it might be prudent to consult the inclinations of the inhabitants of those provinces. This he thought probable, but he stated it only from conjecture. He certainly considered the recognition of the French Republic as of the last importance, and much more necessary as a preliminary than the conditional recognition of America, during the last war. Though the French, acknowledged by almost all Europe, and triumphant in their military career, might not condescend to complain of the circumstance of not being recognized they would feel and resent the indignity. If the French had talked of the British nation, without any notice of His Majesty, or the Government, would not the right honourable gentleman have dwelt on this as a proof of their insincerity in their desire of peace? Since the French had bestowed upon the various Republics of Genoa, Venice, Berne, &c. their titles of Magnific Doge, &c. they had been upon better terms with these states. The French therefore felt from his conduct, that the Minister discovered no serious inclination for peace. Much as he disliked the system of annexation which the French professed, still he thought that a fair chance had not been given to any proposals for negotiation. He wished the House to come to some resolution which would bring forward a different system of measures. Of the finances he had said little. He reprobated the practice of comparing the state of our finances with the exhausted situation of the enemy, and thereby deriving arguments for perseverance. He was sensible that our resources were great, and he was happy to consider them in that light; but the efforts which the French had made, should convince us that their resources were not exhausted.

The House then divided,

For the motion, 42 ; Against it, 216. Majority, 174.  
The House adjourned.

*Wednesday, 11th May.*

On the motion of Mr. LECHMERE, the House resolved into a Committee on the high price of corn.

Mr. LECHMERE observed that it was painful for him to repeat the complaints he had been obliged to make on this subject. He considered himself ill treated by the little attention that was paid to a question such as this, of the greatest importance. It had been stated that his speeches had a tendency to inflame the minds of the people, but if even there were any disturbance in the country it could be owing only to His Majesty's Ministers, who had truly inflamed the minds of the people by their gross misconduct. The consolidation of smaller farms into large ones he conceived to be one grand source of evil, which he wished to remedy. There was an act of the 28th of Henry VIII. which he thought ought to be enforced. Jobbers, forestallers, and regraters should not pass unpunished. He concluded by moving the following Resolution.—“ That the chairman be instructed to move for leave to bring in a bill to enforce the bringing of corn to be sold in the public market ; and to prevent the bringing of adulterated flour to the market.”

Mr. FRANCIS seconded the motion, and said that he was eager and desirous to take this and every opportunity to support the views and to declare his entire concurrence in the principles and objects professed by his honourable friend, though he was very much afraid that the state of public business, and lateness of the season, would make it impossible for his honourable friend to succeed in his intentions in the course of the present session. Mr. Francis bore witness to his zeal, though it had been perpetually defeated by accidents and impediments, which had put it out of his power to bring forward his motion at an earlier day. No man could have taken more pains to collect information on the subject, nor do I believe that any member of this House is better acquainted with it than he is. I cannot pretend to the same knowledge, but I have as much zeal, and especially in the cause of the poor ; and he may be assured, that although he may be defeated now, he will always find me ready to support his benevolent views in another session, if I should happen to have a seat in another Parliament. There are two advantages, however, which I have mentioned on other occasions, more than once, and which might be effected without any legislative interference of the House—I mean, by the influence and example of individuals ; if, when they return into their several

countries, they would give encouragement to the measures, and promote it, as I have done to the utmost of my power, at their own expence; I mean by providing every labouring man in every parish with the means of grinding his own corn. I have had a great number of models made of the hand-mills used in India, and distributed them as far as I had an opportunity. They are very simple in their construction, and might be easily improved by persons who have more skill in these matters than I have. What I wish is, that gentlemen, who wish to serve the industrious poor, would give these hand-mills to such as were willing to make use of them.—Many of us have subscribed ten or twenty pounds in our parishes for the relief of the poor. The expence of providing hand-mills would not be so considerable, and I am convinced it would be much more effectual. Not only the whole profit of the miller, lawful and unlawful, would be saved to poor people, which we all know is a very considerable object, especially to those who have nothing to spare, but all of us would have the great advantage of knowing with certainty the materials of which our bread was made. I, for one, will assuredly grind for myself as soon as I can get into the country, and will do all I can to recommend the measure among my neighbours. The next thing to be done is to provide a parish oven to bake generally for the poor; or if that be attended with difficulty, at least to oblige bakers to bake loaves at a fixed price, as they do pies and pastry. These two measures, fully carried into execution, I am perfectly sure, would give a relief to the industrious poor, far beyond what any gentleman, who has not attended to the subject, would at first sight think possible. There are other improvements which might be easily made by exciting the skill of ingenious persons, and rewarding them for their trouble. These I shall suggest shortly in the words of a friend of mine, who, I believe, is as great a master of the subject as any man in the kingdom. “The most effectual way of serving the public will be to give a handsome bounty to the man, who, in a given time, brings forth to public view the best wheat mill, acting on the cheapest and simplest construction, to be worked by man or boy with the least labour, and to be made with stones of at least two feet in diameter, (those made of iron do not answer for wheat, and are much too tedious in their operation.) To give a small bounty for the three following improvements: first, to him who shall discover the best method of preserving yeast the longest, not less than six months, so as to remain perfectly sweet and proper for baking. Secondly, to him who shall discover the best substitute for yeast, the same being adjudged to be perfectly wholesome, and effectual to its purpose.

Thirdly, to him who discovers, simplifies, and makes perfectly intelligible to the meanest capacity the true French method of making bread with leaven. By these means, if you choose to make a motion to the purpose, you will have the blessings of the country and poor; since, if your bounties have effect, which I am sure they will, the miller's trade will be in a great measure knocked up, and the bread be good, wholesome, and at two-thirds of its price, while the farmer's honest profit will be the same." Mr. Francis concluded with saying, that, if measures of this kind were heartily adopted and steadily pursued, the certain consequence would be, not only that the poor would be better fed and at a cheaper rate, but that all ranks of people would be provided with nourishment in this essential article, infinitely more wholesome and palatable than they are at present. Whether in or out of Parliament, he was determined to promote these useful and truly humane objects to the utmost of his ability.

Mr. MARTIN thought the House indebted to the honourable gentleman for his indefatigable exertions on behalf of the poor. He was afraid the period of the session was too far advanced to make the present motion likely to succeed. He hoped, however, that many beneficial regulations would be adopted in the ensuing session; at the same time that he begged not to be understood as pledged to support any specific proposition.

Mr. BUXTON was of opinion, that the bill was not sufficient remedy for the grievance of which the honourable gentleman complained. One part of the honourable member's proposition was superfluous, as it was impossible to sell corn at all, except by sample. As the session was far advanced, and the business was of much importance, he would move, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."

The House divided,

Ayes, 34—Noes, 10.

List of the Minority in favour of Mr. Lechmere's motion.

Mr. Francis

Mr. J. T. Stanley

Mr. Ligon

General Smith

Mr. Foley

General Tarleton

Mr. Jekyll

Sir Richard Hill

Lord William Russell

Sir William Dolben

Mr. Lechmere, Teller.

The House resolved itself into a Committee on the Dog-tax bill.

Lord SHEFFIELD moved, that occupiers of unassessed houses should not be exempted from the tax.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the motion, in the present

instance, was informal, as it was in fact a proposition for a new tax, which could not be submitted to, except in the Committee of Ways and Means, which was not closed. The Speaker agreeing in opinion, the motion was withdrawn.

The order for committing the bill was then read.

Mr. DENT could not help noticing, that the tax had not only been applied to purposes contrary to his intention, but diverted from those channels through which it should have flowed, if meant to operate as beneficial regulations.

The House then went into the Committee.

Mr. LECHMERE wished that it could be possible to tax lap-dogs—a pampered useless race.<sup>111</sup> There was a great lady in the city (he would not mention names), that loved these dogs so well as to keep sixteen of them [A loud laugh] And he had heard forsooth of a delicate lady, who was as attentive to the constitution and nerves of her dogs as her own health: she talked of the puppy in the most affected manner: Oh, dear, Sir! poor Pompey is so ill, that I can get him to take nothing but Savoy biscuits steeped in Burgundy: he was once so strong as to eat minced chicken and sweet-bread.

By one of the clauses in the bill, the duty is ordered to be assessed on the 5th of July next for three quarters, and to be continued yearly afterwards on every 5th of April. The report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee on the slave-carrying bill,

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that he would for the present forego his intention of introducing a provision in the bill, to limit the number of ships employed at present in the trade to those already engaged. But the other, with respect to the number of slaves being apportioned to the quantity of tonnage, as mentioned on a former night, was one that he would not relinquish.

After a short conversation between General Tarleton, Mr. Wilberforce, Sir William Young, Mr. Barham, Alderman Lushington, and Mr. William Smith.

Mr. STANLEY moved, that the Chairman do report progress, and ask leave to sit again; on which a division was called for, when there not being more than thirty-six members present, the House was of course adjourned.

*Thursday, 12th May.*

Mr. SHERIDAN gave notice, that as he understood it would be inconvenient to-morrow to discuss it, he would postpone his in-

tended motion, concerning the West-India expedition, to next Wednesday.

Mr. FRANCIS observed, an order had been made, on the 21st of April, for laying upon the table an account of all the sums of money paid by the East-India Company to Government, towards the 500,000*l.* which they annually engaged to pay, together with an account of the balance now remaining due upon it, and was surprized to see that order had not been obeyed.

Mr. DOUGLAS said, if he did not mistake, the order had been obeyed, for he had read the papers.

The SPEAKER informed him that he believed the papers had not been presented, but some inquiry should be made about them, and if they had not, he would give information.

Mr. JEKYLL stated, that he could not acquit himself of having regularly performed his duty to his constituents at a time when the House was at the close of its parliamentary existence, if he did not press an answer upon one very material and important question before that interval expired. The House must have heard a variety of reports of the successes of the French armies in Italy—reports which were so connected in their general statements as to be tantamount to confirmation. By these reports it was pretty generally understood, that the French armies had almost pushed their successes to the capital of Sardinia; that the King of Sardinia was suing for peace, and placing two of his strongest fortresses in their hands, which were considered to be the key of his dominions, as a security for his engagement. Now, in consequence of these reports, he begged leave to ask the right honourable gentleman opposite, whether he intended to remit the 200,000*l.* lately voted by Parliament to his Majesty, to fulfil his engagements, in the form of a subsidy? He desired to be understood, that he did not state his question invidiously, but for general satisfaction. He pitied the misfortunes of the King of Sardinia, and lamented that he should have incurred them by that desperate and dangerous alliance in which he had embarked. He feared that he was now trembling in his capital for his dominions, and therefore scorned to triumph in his distresses, but he thought it would be idle to call that a subsidy, of which co-operation was not the fruit. If the money, voted by Parliament, was to be granted as an eleemosynary gift, let the House of Commons know so; and let the people, who have been drained of such immense sums for foreign Princes, who have, one by one, deserted them, be told in what manner this also was to be applied.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he did not conceive that the ques-

tion, consistent with the good sense of the learned gentleman, was put in that way which claimed an immediate answer from him.—As to the exact situation of affairs in Italy, he was not, from his information, incompetent at present to decide. He believed that the affairs of the King of Sardinia might be in a critical situation, but it was impossible to say, at present, what precise effect the event might have on the war. But surely it must be obvious to the learned gentleman, that though the subsidy had been voted, the obligation on the part of this country ceased, if the parties were incapacitated from carrying on the war; this was a self-evident proposition, that required no farther explanation.

Mr. JEKYLL asked, if there was any intention to send the money till the news was authenticated, and requested to know if the subsidy was not already remitted?

Mr. Chancellor PITT made no reply.

The order of the day being read, for the third reading of the bill for granting to His Majesty a tax on real succession,

The SPEAKER put the question, That the bill be read a third time.

Mr. FRANCIS said—“ Mr. Speaker, I should indeed be sorry that this pernicious bill should finish its progress through the House, without my having had an opportunity of expressing my opinion of it more explicitly and distinctly than by a silent vote. I do not mean to enter into any observations on the particular provisions of the bill. The objections to it in detail, on the score of injustice, hardship, and impracticability, I believe, are endless; I hope they are insurmountable. Let the bill pass as it is, with all its vices and all its absurdities. The more it is loaded with them, the better; for that, I fear, is the only chance we have of ever seeing it repealed. My objections are on principle and fundamental. They are the result of the most careful attention and consideration which I am capable of giving to any subject. I do not believe that it is possible for any human ability to answer them fairly. I look upon the bill not merely as an act of taxation, but as a political measure, immoderately increasing the influence of the Crown, and full of danger in its obvious consequences to the constitution and freedom of the country. It appears in a form which never was assumed, and acts on principles which never were avowed in this House before. The essential qualities of the bill are these:—First, that it does not operate immediately, nor with all its force, but applies to cases and situations which do not instantly exist, and which, therefore, individuals may hope are remote from themselves, and may never reach them. Of course it annihilates that just and rational



check, which the constitution relies on, in favour of the subject, namely, that the representative will not impose exorbitant taxes, without clear necessity, on his constituents, as long as he shares immediately and alike with those who are to pay. By far the greater part of the members of this House are already in possession of all that they have expected. But the most dreadful of all considerations is, that the tax is to operate, not *now*, but hereafter. What guard, then, have we left against the most profligate extravagance and waste of the public fortune, if no part of the burden, whatever it may be, is to be borne by ourselves? Suppose, for a moment, that by any possibility the expences of an actual war could be provided by taxes, of which the burden should not be felt till twenty years hence, how few would care or consider what that expence would amount to. Too many of us, I fear, would say—"The case will not happen in our time." But not only the entailed expence would be disregarded, but the war itself, and all its pernicious consequences, would be thought of with unconcern, as long as the money by which it was supported was not taken directly out of our pockets; so that all the checks derived from self-interest against profusion on one side, and profligate measures on the other, would be utterly removed. But, secondly, this tax, whenever it does act, will not operate collectively, and at once, on the whole community, but individually and successively upon one man after another.—Here another guard against unjust taxes is taken away. When all men feel together, they will probably resist together; but when every individual may possibly hope that the burden may never fall upon himself, or remotely affect his posterity, he shrinks, of course, from united opposition, and looks to nothing but personal exemption, or personal compensation. At last, however, the effects of this tax appear to have made a more general impression. Some persons (I say it without the smallest satisfaction, though I have lamented their absence) have at last come forward to oppose it. In the last three years, no questions have occurred, in which the honour, the safety, or the existence of their country was concerned.—This tax touches property in great masses, and this tax must be resisted. Sir, it happened to me, lately, to recommend it to some of our great, enlightened Ministers to look into history for instruction. I said, it would enable them to judge, from the former policy and practice of the House of Savoy, of what the conduct of the Court of Turin might probably be in the present conjuncture. They heard me, as usual, with indifference and scorn. The event has now taken place, even beyond my apprehension. Why do I allude to this circumstance at present? To engage, if it be possible, the

great landed proprietors of this country to look seriously at their own situation before it be too late. History, in effect, is prophecy, and, in a general view and judgement of human conduct, even better than particular intelligence. I wish these great proprietors of masses of land to look into the history of Spain and France, and see what happened there to persons of their own level, and once as rich as themselves. The grandees of Spain thought themselves secure in their titles, and rank, and fortune, and refused to make common cause with the people, when the laws and liberty of their country were attacked and destroyed by Charles V. and Philip II. You know the consequence. The most insignificant and degraded order of nobility in Europe, are the grandees of Spain. In France, the same event happened: the great lords were drawn from their estates and their castles, to attend on the Monarch. By degrees they became slaves at Versailles, and for the most part had nothing to subsist on but the bounty of the Court, *les graces de la Cour*—they, whose estates were left to them, if they happened to give offence to a minister or to a mistress, when there was no room in the Bastille, were sent back to their estates—they were *exiles dans leurs terres*; and banishment in fact it was, because their house were in ruins, and their lands in desolation. Let our great proprietors look to these examples: the ruin which they suffer to be brought on the other orders of the community will not stop there; their turn assuredly will come: at present, I know, they are happy and secure; they think they are in no danger, that they have nothing to apprehend for themselves, and that all that they are doing is only to destroy the liberty of their fellow-subjects."

Mr. GREY rose, and said, he would not detain the House long on a question so amply debated, but he conceived there was one insuperable objection to the present bill, which had escaped the notice of the House—if he understood the bill right, if he bequeathed his property to his eldest son, and the second in entail, the son succeeding to the second son would not be subject to the tax, but if he bequeathed his property to his brother, the son succeeding to that brother would be liable to the tax, which rendered the succession so unintelligible, that it must be the sources of continual inconveniences. The clauses were fraught with insurmountable contradictions, and were such as he called upon the learned gentlemen at the other side of the House to explain.

The House divided, that the bill be read a third time.

Ayes, 48—Noes, 46—Majority, 2

Mr. SHERIDAN moved, that the bill be read a third time his day three months; when another division took place,

Ayes, 53; Noes, 54.—Majority, 1.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that the bill be read a third time to-morrow,

Ayes, 54;—Noes, 54.

The SPEAKER then gave the casting vote for the third reading to-morrow.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then informed the House, that, as he perceived so many country gentlemen were unfriendly to the bill, he should move to-morrow to put it off for three months, and in the mean time consider of another tax in the place of it.

Mr. SHERIDAN, we understand, gave notice, that he would, to-morrow, move for repealing the other bill, for taxing personal property in collateral succession.

The House adjourned.

*Friday, 13th May.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day, for the third reading of the bill for granting to His Majesty a tax on the real succession of landed estates.

The order being read, he moved, that the bill be read a third time this day three months; which was agreed to.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he hoped the right honourable gentleman had now reconsidered the Personal Succession tax, and was prepared to give it up, but it was too much to expect that he would give up two so great fortresses of revenue in one night. If the honourable gentleman derived any credit by abandoning the Real Succession Tax, he should make it complete, by renouncing the Personal Succession tax, which was equally exceptionable in its principle, and more dangerous in its operation. He was astonished that this bill had raised so little the attention and excited the opposition of the commercial world. It had been said that the landed gentlemen were like a sheep, which allowed itself to be shorn without complaint, while the monied gentlemen were like a hog, that squeaked when a single bristle was plucked. Here, however, the observation had been completely belied. Indeed, some address seemed to have been displayed in dividing the two bills, though the same in principle, and thus by dividing the interest, contriving likewise to divide the opposition. Upon the ground that the honourable gentleman had stated for withdrawing the Real Succession tax, it was not entirely abandoned, but was only set asleep, and might be revived when the grounds were removed. The reason was stated to be that the landed interest was already more severely taxed in proportion than the mercantile interest. He had formerly

stated, and he now repeated, that though this were the last campaign of the war, the first measure that the right honourable gentleman would be forced to take would be, to lay on permanent taxes to the amount of three millions, and to raise the peace revenue to 23 millions. This was his fixed opinion; and he had no objection to have his words taken down, should it on any future discussion be found convenient to recur to them. In laying on taxes to this amount, it would soon happen that commercial property would be sufficiently taxed, and landed property would have no ground of exemption upon the score of inequality, and the reasons stated for giving up the Real Succession tax would cease to operate. Mr. Sheridan then stated, that the principle of the two bills was the same, but the one already passed was much more dangerous. The different effects of these two bills, he considered as preposterous; if a man dies worth 50,000*l.* and leaves landed estates to that amount to his heir, Government by one bill receives no benefit: but if such a personal property be left, by virtue of the other bill it is authorized to seize upon part of the produce. If a merchant dies, a certain duty is to be paid to Government, on the calculation of all his commercial concerns, speculations, and debts, and a balance struck upon the whole, before a division of his property could be made; a period of five or six years frequently took place before his affairs could be settled, and in the mean time the executor would be debarred from paying off the amount of the legacies till the quantum of the Government demand by this tax was ascertained; and to whom, Mr. Sheridan asked, was all this to be submitted? To certain subordinate officers appointed by the commissioners of the stamp duties throughout every county in Great Britain; he supposed there must be 20,000 such officers to carry this into effect. Mr. Sheridan here stated a case, that a man leaves an extensive trade to his son, reserving one-tenth part of it to a natural son; he apprehended that by this act the officer would be bound to know that the Executor really pays the tenth part of the profit of the trade; and how, he asked, was it possible for him to know this without an inspection of his books and affairs? An evil would unavoidably grow out of this, not only of publishing to the world what the deceased might wish to have concealed, but also it would go to the extent of appointing, not Wards of Chancery, but of the Treasury, on behalf of such son. Let the right honourable gentleman, he added, farther consider the delicacy of a man's credit engaged in large commercial concerns; many of the largest capital and credit might be subject to temporary embarrassments. If commercial men would turn this matter maturely over in their minds, Mr. Sheridan said,

they would be convinced that it would prove such a blow to commerce as would prevent it from ever flourishing in this country. He stated another objection ; that by taxing a man's trade, manufacture, and industry, it held out an inducement to him to retire from business, and live upon his estate, by which means he would be exempted from the tax, thus imposing a penalty upon industry, and holding out a bounty to indolence. He shewed that this bill, which professed to be taken from a law in Holland, was of a more oppressive nature, for in that country a man's concerns in trade were not affected by the operation of the law. Mr. Sheridan wished that the right honourable gentleman might have time to reconsider the bill, and to consult commercial men on the subject—and said he would leave the result to the discretion of the Lords of the Treasury. He adverted to the difficulty which might occur, as to supplying the amount of this tax, which was calculated at 100,000*l.* and hinted, that if the King of Sardinia's subsidy of 200,000*l.* was to be withheld from him under present circumstances, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could be at no loss for a remedy, and might even think himself obliged to the French for having so opportunely tossed that sum into his hands. He hoped, that at any rate the Chancellor of the Exchequer would attempt the repeal of it in the next session of Parliament. He concluded with moving, "that leave be given to bring in a bill to authorise the commissioners of the stamp office to postpone carrying into effect the act passed this session of Parliament, imposing a duty upon personal property, if ordered so to do under the hands of the Lords of the Treasury."

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he was doubtful whether he ought to say ~~any~~ thing on the present occasion ; and indeed he would not have troubled the House, but that he felt it his duty to return his thanks to the honourable gentleman for the uncommon solicitude he had expressed for his reputation ; each friendly attention, and generous care for his credit, merited his acknowledgments, and evinced a delicacy of sentiment truly worthy of the honourable gentleman. Not feeling, however, any great wish for that kind of credit, he must beg leave to decline it. As to the objections now offered by the honourable gentleman, they had been all made when the bill was discussed before.—Not one had been urged that had not been stated in the Committee, and answered distinctly. Had the honourable gentleman been able to attend at that time, he would have heard his right honourable friend, the Attorney General, demonstrate to the House, that the situation of an executor would be rendered more safe and easy by the bill. He could not help remarking the superior ingenuity of the honourable gen-

tleman's arguments on this occasion (his arguments on all occasions were ingenious)—he endeavoured to shew that there would be occasion for additional taxes to the amount of three millions, and on the strength of that presumption desired to begin a reinforcement of the revenue, by taking away one hundred thousand pounds. Whether it was or was not true, that three millions additional taxes would be required, was not for him now to argue; but he was glad the honourable gentleman had desired it should be recorded, and would probably hereafter remind him of it. Another argument, equally ingenious and paradoxical, was, that the tax was severe on the commercial interest, though they did not resist it—and to increase the paradox, the honourable gentleman repeated an old remark, that if a bristle was plucked from them they felt it. It so happened that this bill was a long while going through the House, and went through more stages than other bills, having been committed and re-committed, and yet little or no resistance was made to it—a strong proof, particularly when reinforced by the honourable gentleman's of their “feeling on having a bristle plucked,” that they did not conceive it to be oppressive in the smallest degree.

Mr. M. ROBINSON thought the principle which made the Chancellor of the Exchequer abandon the one, should make him repeal the other. He declared that under the operation of this act, a person would not only avoid being executor, but he would be afraid to be an heir.—

General TARLETON supported the motion, and conceived that both bills should stand or fall together, and in fact, he observed, they were originally introduced in one bill, but were divided only to suit the convenience of gentlemen in the discussion.

General MACLEOD rose to call the attention of the House to a subject, he conceived, of great importance to the constitution and liberties of this country—he meant the freedom of General Election, which, he was much afraid, might be interrupted by the barracks and fortresses lately erected in this kingdom. He then desired the act of George II. to be read, which provides, that no military force should be kept within two miles of the place where the election was held. The act being read, he said, he feared, that the barracks lately erected might be rendered exceptions to the principle and provisions of the act; and hence, as a general election was approaching, he would move for a Resolution of the House to prevent any such bad effect.—He then moved as follows—Resolved, “That it is the opinion of this House, that

the barracks erected since the passing of the 8th of George II. are not within the exceptions of that act."

The SECRETARY AT WAR said, that the Resolution of the honourable general was merely by way of supplement to, and in aid of, the act; and therefore intirely nugatory, as the act was sufficiently obligatory in itself. The spirit and letter of the act had been always scrupulously attended to, and carried into practice by removing military forces from the places of general elections to the distance specified by the act.—This had been invariably the rule, bating in places where the King or some of the Royal Family resided, which were rendered exceptions to the act. If the honourable general had any charge to make against the public offices for having taken any steps contrary to the provisions of the act, he ought to have moved to that effect: or, if he thought the act itself incapable of attaining its end, he should have moved for its repeal.

Mr. GREY thought that the honourable General had not attended sufficiently to the wording of the act, or he must have found such a motion unnecessary. In fact, the act was strong enough, and if it should be transgressed, Ministers would be responsible. He was aware that the system of barracks was matter of constitutional jealousy; but there was no room for the doubt expressed by the honourable General, and hence he wished him to withdraw his motion.

General MACLEOD said, though every word from the honourable gentleman who spoke last had much weight with him, he still persisted a good deal in his opinion; however, if he had an opportunity, he would move, on some further day, that all the walls about barracks should be levelled with the ground, as he thought such walled fortresses dangerous to the liberty of the country.

Mr. SHERIDAN thought it necessary to ask the Secretary at War, whether he considered barracks as coming within the exceptions, or whether he would think it his duty to send away the soldiers from the barracks of any town during an election?

The SECRETARY AT WAR hoped the House was not under such a delusion as to consider that this was a new question. He would certainly do what the letter and spirit of that act prescribed, and as the practice had been time out of mind.

The motion was withdrawn.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR moved the order of the day for the consideration of the report on the Quakers' bill.

Sir WILLIAM SCOTT offered a clause to be added to the re-

port. He observed that this bill was of great importance, as it involved property of a singular nature. He meant the property of the church in tythes, much of which was in the hands of laymen as well as churchmen; it became therefore necessary to be cautious that no law should be made perpetual at once that might tend to affect that property. It became still the more necessary to take care of this species of property on account of the popular prejudice against it. He was a friend to the present bill, but thought it should be made only a measure of experiment, in order that the effect of it might be tried before it should be declared perpetual. He therefore proposed a clause, providing, that this bill shall continue for five years, and from thence until the end of the then next session of Parliament.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR had not the least opposition to this clause, because it appealed to the best test of wisdom, experience. The clause was therefore read, agreed to, and made part of the bill, which was then ordered to be engrossed, and to be read a third time to-morrow, if then engrossed.

The Committee on India papers, which stood as the order of the day, was, on the motion of Mr. DUNDAS, discharged, and fixed for Wednesday next.

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN moved the order of the day on the slave-carrying bill, which was, that the House should resolve itself into a Committee upon it. The order being read, he moved, that the Speaker do now leave the Chair.

Mr. WILBERFORCE supported the motion.

General TARLETON opposed the motion. He wished the House to consider the circumstances of the merchants engaged in the slave trade, which were much deranged by the proceedings of the House. It was late in the session, and he hoped the business would be suffered to lie over to another session. The House divided, and there not being a sufficient number of members to constitute a House, an adjournment took place of necessity,

*Saturday, 14th May.*

General SMITH observed, that as Mr. Dundas had repeatedly adjourned the consideration of the India budget, and as he now proposed to adjourn it again until Wednesday next, and as the session was drawing near to a conclusion, it was most probable that the right honourable gentleman would on that day again move to adjourn it. The General gave notice, that if the Secretary of State on Wednesday next, again moved to adjourn the consideration, or if he should not attend his duty in Parliament on that day; that



he should consider himself fully justified in proceeding in the same manner, as if he was present, because, he considered this declaration as giving sufficient information of his intentions.

Mr. WILBERFORCE lamented that the slave-trade-carrying bill had not passed. In the present situation of the session, which was near drawn to a conclusion, he would not press the matter farther, but resume it early in the next session of Parliament.

Generals SMITH and TARLETON said they were assured that the persons concerned, had too much honour to infringe the provisions of the bill, when it should expire.

The order of the day being moved for the third reading of the Quakers' relief bill, Mr. ROBERT SMITH brought up a clause which he had prepared to add as a rider to the bill, to liberate two women who were confined in Nottingham jail for nine years, for refusing to appear to a citation in the ecclesiastical court, though they belonged to a certain class of Quakers, and had the same scruples in which Quakers were indulged.

The SPEAKER said, that he was sorry to start any objections in point of form to such a proposal; but as it was not connected with the title, nor consonant to the clauses of the bill, he thought it could not, without dangerously infringing the rules of the House, be introduced.

Mr. Serjeant ADAIR supported the clause on its merits.

Sir WILLIAM SCOTT, the Master of the Rolls, and Sir RICHARD SUTTON opposed it as a violation of the orders of the House, and also contended that it was not right to suffer people to set up religious scruples whether real or pretended, as a pretext for disobedience to the laws of the country. As a point of humanity, they said, however, in a regular way, they would not object to any relief the House would think proper to grant. They farther observed, that these people were not allowed to be Quakers, and that they could not come within the provisions of the act.

Mr. ROBERT SMITH finding this to be the sense of the House, said that he would on a future occasion bring in a bill for their relief, as certainly if they had infringed the laws, nine years imprisonment was sufficient punishment.

The bill was then read a third time, and passed, and ordered to the Lords.

Adjourned to Wednesday.

*Wednesday, 18th May.*

Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN said, that probably he would not again have a seat in that House, but wished before the prorogation

of Parliament to say a few words. He begged to have it remembered, that it was his anxious desire to have the slave-carrying trade taken out of the hands of private individuals, and placed in those of Government.—Such regulation, he was persuaded, would be of advantage to the unfortunate negroes, as the spirit of gain was such at present, that the Middle-passage bill was grossly violated, and hundreds of slaves above the amount specified in the act of Parliament, were often crowded together, without any notice being taken of the circumstance by Government.

The SPEAKER reminded the honourable Baronet, that there was no question before the House.

Mr. WILBERFORCE rose, and merely stated, that it was his desire to have it understood, that however he might agree with his honourable friend in other particulars on the same subject, yet what had now fallen from him did not accord with his idea.

Mr. DUNDAS having moved to discharge the order of the day which was to take into consideration papers relative to the India budget,

General SMITH observed, that he was extremely glad to see the right honourable gentleman in his place, for however determined he was to represent facts in their true colours, yet it was much more satisfactory to him to state these facts, in the presence, rather than in the absence of the party concerned. He knew it was not perfectly regular to advert to former debates, but on this occasion it was impossible to avoid it, since that right honourable gentleman had made use of an expression of so personal a nature, that he would freely confess he found it extremely difficult to reconcile to his feelings. No man in the House was more eager or more solicitous to repel attacks, when made upon himself, than the right honourable Secretary—he did not blame that solicitude; on the contrary, he thought it very commendable—but surely then he must permit other gentlemen, though not possessing official situations, to feel themselves as fully entitled to defend themselves from unjust accusation as that right honourable gentleman—and it was a right that he was determined to exercise. The expression alluded to was this: the President of the Board of Control had declared, that in a part of his \* speech, relative to the discontents of the officers of the Indian army, “ *he had libelled that respectable body of men.*” The right honourable gentleman must have felt himself very sore indeed, from what had been urged in debate, when he could so far forget himself as to make use of such language; for the Secretary of State

\* General Smith.

well knows, and the House must also be convinced, from the whole tenor of his conduct, during the long and frequent discussions upon the redress of grievances for half-pay officers, that he had upon all occasions strenuously supported their rights; and he felt it a great injustice done to himself, to have such a charge imputed to him. He had expressed his concern that so much unnecessary delay should have arisen before these regulations were sent out, which, when once arrived in India, he hoped and believed, would in general prove extremely satisfactory; but he could not dissemble that a very strong spirit of discontent did prevail when the last advices came from that country—that the date of those advices was in December. The right honourable gentleman had declared in his place, that these regulations had been sent to India several months since. The Chairman of the East-India Company went farther; he asserted, that the general outlines of them had been sent to India so long since as June last, and that they had received answers to those letters, which mentioned the general satisfaction with which they were received. He positively asserted the fact to be otherwise, and he would prove it from papers lying on the table, moved for by him, and presented to the House by the East-India Company. Those papers incontestibly prove, that the regulations were not dispatched until the 23d of February last, and allowing for a very good passage, would not probably arrive till some time in June next, and as to the officers being satisfied with the general outlines as stated by the honourable Chairman of the East-India Company, to refute his assertion, he has only but to appeal to the public orders issued by the Government of Bengal, and by the Commander in Chief of the Forces, in October and November, which prohibited the assembling of the officers of the army in Meetings or Committees, without the approbation of the Commander in Chief. He could not avoid expressing his astonishment, that such assertions should be ventured in that House; it could be done with no other view than to lessen the force and weight of the observations he had made, but with what success the House must judge.

He did not feel himself in the least obliged to the right honourable gentleman for his candour, when he acknowledged, that he thought him very sincere in his attachment to the cause of the officers, when it was accompanied with a declaration, that in this case, he certainly did not manifest his usual discretion. In answer to which, he must inform the Secretary of State, that he did not come down to the House, until he had well considered the subject, and the line he ought to adopt. He was not a man accustomed to call the attention of the House on light grounds or trivial occasions, therefore

when he first introduced this subject, it was not from the impulse of the moment, but the result of cool reflection, upon the best judgement he could form of the existing circumstances, communicated to him by letters from India. Neither was he a man capable of retracting any thing he should ever advance in that House, unless from conviction of error. But no such conviction has taken place; what he then asserted, he still believes; later advices have confirmed his opinion; namely, that very great discontent does prevail amongst the officers of the army in Bengal. No intelligence of redress of grievances having arrived, and knowing that a large military force of the nation being on its passage to India, opinions were then entertained, that it was the intention of the Government of this country to compel them to submission—it matters not for the argument, whether the opinion so entertained was true or false—he only lamented, and sincerely lamented, that such suspicion should ever exist, as it would not be the most powerful persuasion to wait with due resignation for the relief which has been given to them. If there remains the shadow of a doubt of the truth of what he had asserted, he would bring evidence to the bar to prove it. If the session being so near its end prevented that mode of proof, he had not the same apprehensions as an honourable friend of his, of being corrupted by a friendly call on the right honourable Secretary at the Horse Guards, and if he would give him his parole, that the testimony which he should now produce, should be of no prejudice to the person who gave it, he might command his attendance at any time he would appoint.

He had great reliance upon the firmness, good sense, and moderation of the General who commands the Company's troops. He had shewn to the officers, a letter of a late date, written by the General (General Smith) exhorting him to impress in the most forcible manner on the minds of the officers, a firm reliance on the promises made by Mr. Secretary Dundas in Parliament, and at all events to use his utmost endeavours to prevent them from adopting any rash or unjustifiable measures, which could only serve to tarnish their hitherto meritorious and praise-worthy conduct.

One dispatch only had failed to India with the regulations. If any accident should happen to that conveyance, the minds of men, already in a ferment, might become inflamed. It is the duty of Government, by every possible means to prevent an evil, for the remedy is not always certain. He concluded with reading the following extract of a letter dated the 4th of December, 1795.

“ The discontents of the military on the occasion of the delay of redress have arisen to an alarming height; so much so, that if the

last ships of the season do not bring decisive orders on this head, (which, however, I am truly happy to find Mr. Dundas has promised in the House) I have not a doubt but that the military will be most violent, and redress themselves. On the coast of Coromandel they are more moderate; but *even there* the arrangements must not be delayed."

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that to answer completely the objections of the honourable general, it would be necessary for him to go over the whole state of the Company's affairs; but he would merely revert to the renewal of their charters. The data on which he made his arrangements were not then questioned by the House, nor, as he recollected, by the honourable general himself. Experience since evinced to him that he had not assumed fallacious grounds; and, without going into a detailed explanation, he was warranted to assert, from the annual returns in the three past years, that there was enough of surplus for the dividends of 500,000*l.* to be annually made good to Government, after a sufficiency for defraying all expences, establishments, and circumstances whatever. It appears, by the sales of the lowest years, that the surplus was never less than 500,000*l.* and every hour realized to him that state of the Company's affairs which he anticipated in 1792. He begged to remind the honourable general, that if the Company had not since the year 1792 paid a farthing of the participation money, what he then said would not be contradicted. He never promised that the Company's affairs would be so flourishing as to do that in time of war. But though he did not promise so much, still the payments made by the Company in the three last years exceeded his hopes. In 1794 and 1795 they paid the 500,000*l.* and this year they paid 400,000*l.* If then, in the three last years, there had been so little deficiency in the India Estimates, he had not a doubt but the participation money was as secure to Government as the internal resources and revenues of this country. In the year 1793, estimates had been prepared by the Court of Directors, and it appeared that the sales amounted to upwards of 4,900,000*l.* but the last sales were upwards of six millions.—This growing state of the Company's affairs was proved by papers on the table, and did not rest on his or the honourable general's assertions. Another very material circumstance for the case was this—the freight and demurrage of ships, it appeared, cost the Company about a million and a half annually, which would intirely fall to the ground in time of peace. Notwithstanding, however, the great expences of war, the Company paid this year 400,000*l.* and, hence it might be inferred, that they would be

well able to pay the annual 500,000*l.* in time of peace, together with making good all the deficiencies. This they unquestionably would be enabled to do by the savings at home—savings adequate to all expences and charges whatever. Mr. Dundas then adverted to the statement of the honourable general, respecting the intemperance of the officers in India, and lamented that a matter of such serious complexion had been mentioned in that House, on bare rumour. He did not mean to question the private information which General Smith read to the House; but he put it to his own candour and discretion, whether it were not better to let such reports subside into oblivion?—He had heard such rumours himself, but they did not come to him in any official way; and hence he wished to pass them by in silence, though he heard them with pain. He was aware that the officers themselves, on finding that the honourable general mentioned their heat and intemperance in a British House of Commons, would lament that the matter had been made so public. This certainly would be the case; for their disorder was equivalent to rebellion and treason; and, if regularly noticed in that House, must be attended with serious consequences to them. He did not mean to say that they did not labour under hardships, but at the same time, much had been done to put them on a better footing: much time of necessity elapsed before the proper arrangements for their relief could be made; and again, after being made, before they could be transmitted to India, to do them all the justice and advantage which had been intended them. On that view of the case, he thought the honourable general would admit that he urged the matter rashly and unnecessarily. He agreed with General Smith, that they were a very respectable body of men; and concluded, by lamenting that he had mentioned their indiscretion.

General Smith explained.---Adjourned.

*Thursday, 19th May, 1796.*

At three o'clock His Majesty went in the usual state to the House of Lords, and being seated on the Throne, a message was sent by Sir Francis Molineux, Usher of the Black Rod, commanding the attendance of the House of Commons in the Upper Chamber of Parliament. The Speaker, attended by several Members, being at the Bar, His Majesty was pleased to make the following Speech to both Houses of Parliament.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,  
*The public business being now concluded, I think it proper to close*

*this session, and, at the same time, to acquaint you with my intention of giving immediate directions for calling a new Parliament.*

*The objects which have engaged your attention, during the present session, have been of peculiar importance, and the measures which you have adopted have manifested your continued regard to the safety and welfare of my people.*

*The happiest effects have been experienced from the provisions which you have made for repressing sedition and civil tumult, and for restraining the progress of the principles subversive of all established government.*

*The difficulties arising to my subjects from the high price of corn, have formed a principal object of your deliberation; and your assiduity in investigating that subject has strongly proved your anxious desire to omit nothing which could tend to the relief of my people in a matter of such general concern.*

*I have the greatest satisfaction in observing that the pressure of those difficulties is now in a great degree removed.*

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

*I must in a more particular manner return you my thanks for the liberal supplies which you have granted to meet the exigencies of the war. While I regret the extent of those demands, which the present circumstances necessarily occasion, it is a great consolation to me to observe the increasing resources by which the country is enabled to support them.*

*These resources are particularly manifested in the state of the different branches of the revenue, in the continued and progressive extension of our navigation and commerce, in the steps which have been taken for maintaining and improving the public credit, and in the additional provision which has been made for the reduction of the national debt.*

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

*I shall ever reflect with heat-felt satisfaction on the uniform wisdom, temper, and firmness, which have appeared in all your proceedings since I first met you in this place. Called to deliberate on the public affairs of your country, in a period of domestic and foreign tranquillity, you had the happiness of contributing to raise this kingdom to a state of unexampled prosperity.*

*You were suddenly compelled to relinquish the full advantages of this situation, in order to resist the unprovoked aggression of an enemy, whose hostility was directed against all civil society, but more particularly against the happy union of order and liberty, as established in these kingdoms.*

*The nature of the system introduced into France afforded to that country, in the midst of its calamities, the means of exertion beyond the experience of any former time. Under the pressure of the new and unprecedented difficulties arising from such a contest, you have shown yourselves worthy of all the blessings you inherit. By your counsels and conduct the Constitution has been preserved inviolate against the designs of foreign and domestic enemies; the honour of the British name has been asserted; the rank and station which we have hitherto held in Europe has been maintained; and the decided superiority of our naval power has been established in every quarter of the world.*

*You have omitted no opportunity to prove your just anxiety for the re-establishment of general peace on secure and honourable terms; but you have, at the same time, rendered it manifest to the world, that while our enemies shall persist in dispositions incompatible with that object, neither the resources of my kingdom, nor the spirit of my people, will be wanting to the support of a just cause, and to the defence of all their dearest interests.*

*A due sense of this conduct is deeply impressed on my mind.—I trust that all my subjects are animated with the same sentiments; and that their loyalty and public spirit will ensure the continuance of that union and mutual confidence between me and my Parliament, which best promote the true dignity and glory of my crown, and the genuine happiness of my people.*

Then the Lord Chancellor, by His Majesty's Command, said;

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

*It is His Majesty's Royal Will and pleasure, That this Parliament be prorogued to Tuesday, the fifth day of July next, to be then holden; and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued to Tuesday, the fifth day of July next.*



# Abstract of the ACCOUNT laid before PARLIAMENT relative to BARRACKS.

Total Expenditure for Barracks since the year 1791.

Amount paid for building Barracks	—	£ 457,277
Sums due as per Report of Surveyors	—	170,485
Sums that will be wanted	—	107,188
Purchase of Lands	—	29,053
Bedding, &c.	—	28,539
Furniture, &c.	—	45,210
To complete Furniture	—	13,057
Value of rents paid for lands taken on lease	—	20,000
Guernsey and Jersey	—	64,154
		£ 934,954
Total advanced by the Ordnance for Barracks during } the same period	—	95,538
		£ 1,030,492
Issued for erecting and fitting temporary } Barracks	—	£ 243,472
Disco by the Ordnance	—	47,322
		* £ 290,794

Total number of men for which permanent Barracks have been,  
and are to be provided, in Great Britain, Guernsey and Jersey.

Number of Infantry and Cavalry for which Bar- } racks are built in Great Britain	—	£ 15,789
Ditto for which Barracks are to be built	—	9,490
Barracks in Guernsey and Jersey.	—	6,568
Total		£ 31,847

Number of Places, and amount of annual Salaries paid to Officers  
on the New Barrack Establishment.

	No.	Amt. of Salaries.
Barrack Masters	55	£ 7,848
Officers superintending the Barracks	20	5,750
		† £ 13,598

Amount of the Extraordinary Expences of the Army, incurred  
from December 25, 1794, to November 14, 1795.

£ 2,646,990 19 10

For the particulars of this Account see the 43d volume of the Parlia-  
mentary Register.

\* In the account of the distribution of the Vote of Credit 1795, this  
is an article for providing and fitting temporary barracks on the coast,  
when the Publicans could not furnish quarters, 314,197l.

† This does not include extraordinary allowances and travelling charges:

An ACCOUNT of extraordinary expenses of the army, incurred and paid by the right honourable the Paymaster General of His Majesty's forces, from the 15th of November to 24th of December 1795, both inclusive, and not provided for by Parliament.

To bills of exchange, drawn by C. Nesbit, Inspector General of foreign corps on the Continent, for public services	60,081	12	0
To ditto, drawn by J. Robinson, Deputy Paymaster at New Brunswick, for ditto service	1,448	15	7
To ditto, drawn by R. S. Milnes, Governor of Martinique, for ditto service	101	0	0
To ditto, drawn by J. Wentworth, Lieut. Governor of Nova Scotia, for ditto service	4,350	0	0
To ditto drawn by P. Le Mefurier, Lieut. Governor of Alderney, for ditto service	71	5	0
To ditto, drawn by Capt. D'Auvergne, Prince of Bouillin, Commandant at Jersey, for ditto service	5,720	0	0
To ditto, drawn by W. Macarmick, Lieut. Governor of Cape Breton, for ditto service	165	19	4
To ditto drawn by John Small, Lieut. Governor of Guernsey, for ditto service	3,196	0	0
To ditto, drawn by E. Fanning, Lieut. Governor of St. John's, for ditto service	1,383	7	2
To ditto, drawn by Andrew Gordon, Commandant at Jersey, for ditto service	2,428	0	0
To ditto, drawn by His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Commandant at Halifax, for ditto service	2,220	0	0
To bills of exchange, drawn by A. Brymer, Acting Deputy Paymaster at Halifax, for public services	3,993	4	0
To ditto, drawn by G. P. Ricketts, Governor of Barbadoes, for ditto service	101	5	0
To ditto, drawn by W. Lindsay, Governor of Tobago, for ditto service	20	0	0
To ditto, drawn by J. Seton, Governor of St. Vincent's, for ditto service	1,544	12	1
To ditto, drawn by J. Stanley, President of the Council at St. Kitts, for ditto service	359	15	9
To ditto, drawn by the honourable R. Murray, agent at Turk's Island, for ditto service	648	0	0
To ditto, drawn by the Earl of Dunmore, Governor of the Bahama Islands, for ditto service	2,134	14	8
To ditto, drawn by H. Hamilton, Governor of Dominica, for ditto service	18,842	6	6
To ditto, drawn by the Earl of Balcarres, Lieut. Governor of Jamaica, for ditto service	1,170	0	0
To ditto, drawn by H. Hamilton, Governor of the Bermuda Islands, for ditto service	405	9	9
To ditto drawn by John Erskine, Superintendent, &c. of the army serving in the Mediterranean, for ditto service	61,198	12	3

To ditto, drawn by Sir G. Elliot, Bart. Viceroy of Corfica, for ditto service	—	—	19,000	0	0
To ditto, drawn by V. Jones, Commissary General to the army in the Leeward Islands, for ditto service	—	—	12,000	0	0
To ditto, drawn by Sir A. Williamson, K. B. Governor of St. Domingo, for ditto service	—	—	365,523	14	3
To M. G. De Lancey, Barrack Master General, on account, for the erection of barracks, and for the supply of barrack stores and forage for the use of the troops stationed therein	—	—	65,000	0	0
To J. Trotter, Esq. for Hospital bedding for the use of the forces	—	27,234	17	0	
To ditto, for ditto service	—	10,369	12	6	
To ditto, for Hospital bedding for the forces in St. Domingo	—	20,317	4	11	
			57,921	14	5
To James Window, on account, for contingent disbursements for hospitals	—	—	5,000	0	0
To bills of exchange drawn by the acting deputy in the West Indies, on account of the extraordinary expences of the army there	—	—	5,812	10	0
To cash paid by Mr. Winslow, acting ditto in Canada, for ditto of the forces there, for one quarter, to 24th September 1795	—	—	54,868	10	10
To ditto, paid by Mr. Brymer, acting ditto in Nova Scotia, for ditto of the forces there, for one quarter, to ditto	—	—	11,719	16	4
To bills of exchange drawn by Brook Watson, Esq. Superintendent, &c. of the army serving on the Continent	—	—	346,243	14	11
			1,105,673	19	10

The bills of exchange drawn by the acting Deputies in the West Indies, Canada, and Nova Scotia, were not paid under the authority of any Treasury warrant, but were drawn upon the Paymaster General, and paid on different days, as they became due, between the 15th November and 24th December 1795.

Pay Office, Horse Guards,  
29th April 1796.

RICHARD MOLESWORTH,  
Accountant to the Paymaster  
General's Office.

An Account of the unprovided services belonging to the Office of Ordnance, as they stood on the 31st December 1795.

Prepared pursuant to an order of the honourable House of Commons, 3d March 1796.—viz.

Money paid on account of various services to 31st December 1795, since estimate 1796 was presented to Parliament	18,010	10	1
Money due to the captors of the town of the Mole Cape Nicola, and its dependencies, in the island of St. Domingo, for ordnance and stores captured there	12,823	4	2
Money due to the captors of fundry forts in the island of Corfica, for ordnance and stores taken in the said forts	31,939	3	4
Money due to the East-India Company for Salt Petre	45,000	0	0
Exceedings on account of sea service beyond the grant by Parliament for 1795	102,421	18	4
	<hr/>		
	210,194	15	11
	<hr/>		

Office of Ordnance,  
7th March 1796.

J. SARGENT.

THOMAS BAILLIE.

Navy Office, { An ESTIMATE of the DEBT of His Majesty's NAVY, on the Heads hereafter mentioned,  
4th March 1796. as it stood on the 31st of December 1795 :

Prepared pursuant to a Precept of the Honourable House of Commons, dated the 3d March 1796.

### HEADS of the NAVAL ESTIMATES.

#### WEAR AND TEAR, ORDINARY, EXTRA REPAIRS, &c.

Due To pay off and discharge all the bills registered on the course of the navy, for stores, freight  
of store ships, &c. supplied for the service thereof ————  
For freight of tenders, and for stores delivered into His Majesty's several yards, &c. for  
which no bills were made out on the aforesaid 31st December 1795; as att'd to several  
bills of exchange ————  
To His Majesty's several yards and rope yards, for the ordinary and extraordinary ————  
For half pay to sea officers, according to an establishment made by his late Majesty in Council  
on that behalf ————

#### SEAMEN'S WAGES.

Due To pay the men unpaid on books of ships paid off ————  
To pay ships in sea pay on the aforesaid 31st December 1795 ————  
To discharge and pay off all bills entered in course for shop cloaths, bedding for seamen,  
surgeons necessaries, &c. ————

	PARTICULARS.			TOTAL.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
	3,795,688	4	4			
	334,221	7	3			
	356,345	0	0			
	109,368	2	10	4,595,622	14	5
	394,409	12	10			
	921,132	1	8			
	194,003	13	5	1,509,545	7	11

## VICTUALLING DEBT.

As per estimate received from those commissioners: viz.

Due For short allowance to the companies of His Majesty's ships in pay, and which have been paid off ————  
 For Paying off all bills entered on their course ————  
 For provisions delivered, and services performed, for which no bills were made out on the aforesaid 31<sup>st</sup> December 1795 ————  
 For necessary and extra necessary money, bills of exchange, and contingencies ————  
 To the officers, workmen, and labourers employed at the several ports ————

31,548 3 1  
 2,952,709 8 9  
 16,858 6 2  
 24,723 16 5  
 33,377 7 6  
 3,059,217 1 11

## SICK AND WOUNDED DEBT.

As per estimate received from those commissioners: viz.

Due For quarters and cure of Sick and wounded seamen, set on shore from His Majesty's ships at the several ports, prisoners of war, and contingencies relating to that office ————

223,994 14 0

## TRANSPORT DEBT.

As per estimate received from those commissioners: viz.

Due For freight of transports on the aforesaid 31<sup>st</sup> December 1765, and other contingencies relating to that service ————  
 For miscellaneous services provided by that office, by order of the right honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury ————

2,523,455 14 8  
 409,992 15 11

2,933,448 10 7  
 12,331,828 8 10

Navy Office, { An ESTIMATE of the DEBT of His Majesty's NAVY, on the Heads hereafter mentioned,  
4th March 1796. as it stood on the 31st of December 1795:

Prepared pursuant to a Precept of the Honourable House of Commons, dated the 3d March 1796.

### HEADS of the NAVAL ESTIMATES.

#### WEAR AND TEAR, ORDINARY, EXTRA REPAIRS, &c.

Due To pay off and discharge all the bills registered on the course of the navy, for stores, freight of store ships, &c. supplied for the service thereof —  
For freight of tenders, and for stores delivered into His Majesty's several yards, &c. for which no bills were made out on the aforesaid 31st December 1795; as also to several bills of exchange —  
To His Majesty's several yards and rope yards, for the ordinary and extraordinary —  
For half pay to sea officers, according to an establishment made by his late Majesty in Council on that behalf —

#### SEAMEN'S WAGES.

Due To pay the men unpaid on books of ships paid off —  
To pay ships in sea pay on the aforesaid 31st December 1795 —  
To discharge and pay off all bills entered in course for flap cloaths, bedding for seamen, surgeons necessaries, &c. —

	PARTICULARS.			TOTAL.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
	3,795,688	4	4			
	334,221	7	3			
	356,345	0	0			
	109,368	2	10	4,595,622	14	5
	394,409	12	10			
	921,132	1	8			
	194,003	13	5	1,509,545	7	11

## VICTUALLING DEBT.

As per estimate received from those commissioners: viz.

Due For short allowance to the companies of His Majesty's ships in pay, and which have been paid off ————  
 For Paying off all bills entered on their course ————  
 For provisions delivered, and services performed, for which no bills were made out on the aforesaid 31<sup>st</sup> December 1795 ————  
 For necessary and extra necessary money, bills of exchange, and contingencies ————  
 To the officers, workmen, and labourers employed at the several ports ————

31,548 3 1  
 2,952,709 8 9  
 16,858 6 2  
 24,773 16 5  
 33,377 7 6  
 3,059,217 1 11

## SICK AND WOUNDED DEBT.

As per estimate received from those commissioners; viz.

Due For quarters and cure of Sick and wounded seamen, set on shore from His Majesty's ships at the several ports, prisoners of war, and contingencies relating to that office ————

223,994 14 0

## TRANSPORT DEBT.

As per estimate received from those commissioners; viz.

Due For freight of transports on the aforesaid 31<sup>st</sup> December 1765, and other contingencies relating to that service ————  
 For miscellaneous services provided by that office, by order of the right honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury ————

2,523,455 14 8  
 409,992 15 11

2,933,448 10 7  
 12,331,828 8 10



## HEADS of the NAVAL ESTIMATES.

	PARTICULARS.			TOTAL.
	£.	s.	d.	
There remained in the hands of the Treasurers of the Navy	—	—	—	
And also remaining in the Exchequer, of the supplies of the year 1795	—	—	—	
The DEBT of the NAVY amounts to ten million seven hundred and eighty-eight thousand	—	—	—	
nine hundred and eighty-four pounds fourteen shillings and five-pence halfpenny	—	—	—	
	£.	s.	d.	
	491,865	15	10½	
	1,040,977	18	6	1,532,843 14 4½
	—	—	—	10,788,984 14 5½

Memorandum. The sum of 1,546,758l. 16s. 6d. has been received out of the grants for the year 1796, and applied towards the expence of the year 1795, and is not included in the above debt.

N. B. In this debt is included for charge of transports between the 1st January and 31st December 1795, as per account from the Transport Office —  
 And it appears, by an account received from the commissioners of the victualling (which is also included in this debt) that the expence of victualling the land forces, between the 1st January and 31st December 1795, is —

2,344,075	19	7
659,879	5	11
3,003,955	5	6

A. S. Hammond      J. Hanfslow.      Geo. Marsh.  
 C. Hope.      W. Rule.      Geo. Rogers.      W. Bellingham.

Memorandum.—There was remaining in the Hands of the late and present TREASURERS of the NAVY, in MONEY, on the 31st December 1795, as under-mentioned, and may be reckoned towards (attesting the afore said) DEBT of the NAVY.

In what TREASURER's Hands.	IN MONEY.	On the Heads of			TOTAL.		
		Wear and Tear, and Ordinary.	Seamen's Wages.	Viduals.	£.	s.	d.
Right Honourable Isaac Barré.	In Money — Ditto - - towards the Debt for Sick and Wounded Seamen	£. s. d. 3,289 9 10	£. s. d. 2,563 10 0	£. s. d. 88 5 4½	£.	s.	d.
Right Honourable Henry Dundas, 1st Treasurer.	In Money — Ditto - - towards the Debt for Sick and Wounded Seamen	— 3,602 11 11½	10 17 9 1,728 12 10½	— 116 11 3½	5,952	2	11½
Right Honourable Charles Townshend.	In Money — Ditto - - towards the Debt for Sick and Wounded Seamen	— 2,893 5 4½	10 14 11 894 19 7½	— 643 17 1½	5,458	11	1
Right Honourable Henry Dundas, 2d Treasurer.	In Money — Ditto - - towards the Debt for Sick and Wounded Seamen	— 3,440 9 2½	184 19 6 22 6 2	— 512 6 3	4,617	1	7½
Right Honourable Henry Dundas, New Account.	In Money — Ditto - - towards the Debt for Sick and Wounded Seamen	— 274,137 4 7½	30 2 3½ 161,950 1 2	— 32,901 17 4½	4,005	3	11½
		287,363 1 0½	2,843 13 2 170,239 17 5½	— 34,262 17 4½	471,832	16	3½
					491,865	15	10½

There remained, on the 31st December 1795, to come in from the Exchequer, of the supplies of the year 1795 1,040,977 18 6

Abstract of the ACCOUNT delivered to PARLIAMENT of money due on various accounts to the Army, 21st April, 1796.

Amount of monies now due for off-reckonings to the several Colonels, or commanding officers of His Majesty's Regular, Fencible, and Militia Forces	£ 644,106 7 9
--	---------------

Pay and arrears of pay now due to the General and Staff-officers of His Majesty's Service	146,900 12 4
---	--------------

Now due to the several Governors of His Majesty's garrisons in Great Britain and beyond the seas	34,313 13 3
--	-------------

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£ 825,320 13 4

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Account of monies which remain due on account of off-reckonings, January 1st, 1796, and which have since been paid	£ 172,994 0 1
--	---------------

An account of such arrears of His Majesty's Regular, Fencible, and Militia Forces as have been discharged since the 1st of January, 1796	29,643 11 1
--	-------------

An account of all pay and arrears which were due to His Majesty's General and Staff-officers, on the 1st of January, 1796, and have since been discharged	31,056 0 3
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£ 233,693 11 5

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From the exact amount of all arrears now due to the officers of the several regiments, troop, and company, of His Majesty's Regular, Fencible, and Militia Forces, distinguishing the periods for which such arrears are respectively due, cannot be ascertained until the Regimental Accounts of each particular year have been examined at the War-Office: but from such accounts as have been examined and stated at the War-Office, and remain to be finally settled at the Pay-Office, it appears that the sum of 62,198l. 9s. 11d. is due to the Agents, to enable them to clear certain regiments with the following year: but that the sum of 85,661l. 10s. 6d. is due from the Agents in consequence of overpayments on other regiments in the same period: and that the balance due to the public amounts to 23,463l. 0s. 7d.

An Account of all the sums of money advanced by the Bank of England for the public service, and outstanding on the 31st December 1792.

On supply	—	1790	for augmentation of the forces		1,229,000	0	0
Land tax	—	1791	403,000	0	0		
Ditto	—	1792	1,789,000	0	0		
					2,192,000	0	0
Malt	—	1791	125,000	0	0		
Ditto	—	1792	482,000	0	0		
					607,000	0	0
Supply	—	1792	3,500,000	0	0		
Farther supply		1792	1,258,900	0	0		
					4,758,900	0	0
Exchequer bills without interest	—				376,739	0	9
					9,163,639	0	9
Treasury bills of exchange	—				25,192	1	6
					9,188,831	2	3

Bank of England,  
4th March 1796.

A. NEWLAND,  
Chief Cashier.

An Account of all the sums of money advanced by the Bank of England for the public service, and outstanding on the 31st of December 1795.

On Supply	—	1790	for augmentation of the forces		6,000	0	0
Land tax	—	1793	139,000	0	0		
Ditto	—	1794	311,000	0	0		
Ditto	—	1795	1,675,000	0	0		
Ditto	—	1796	1,500,000	0	0		
					3,625,000	0	0
Malt	—	1794	202,000	0	0		
Ditto	—	1795	750,000	0	0		
					952,000	0	0
Vote of credit		1795	2,500,000	0	0		
Farther supply		1795	1,500,000	0	0		
Consolidated Fund		1795	1,265,000	0	0		
					5,265,000	0	0
Exchequer bills without interest	—				376,739	0	9
					10,224,739	0	9
Treasury bills of exchange	—				1,418,960	19	3
					11,643,700	0	0

Bank of England,  
4th March 1796.

A. NEWLAND,  
Chief Cashier.

*Bank of England, April 22d, 1796.*

An ACCOUNT of the Amount of Money advanced for the Public Service by the Bank of England, and outstanding on the 10th of October, 1795, and the 5th of January, 1796, distinguishing each Period.

On the 10th of October, 1795:

			£.	s.	d.
On Supply	-	1790 for Augmentation of the Forces	132,000	—	—
Land Tax	-	1793 — 139,000	—	—	—
Ditto	-	1794 — 572,000	—	—	—
Ditto	-	1795 — 1,971,000	—	—	—
			2,682,000	—	—
Malt	-	1794 — 307,000	—	—	—
Ditto	-	1795 — 750,000	—	—	—
			1,057,000	—	—
Consol. Fund	1795	— 2,500,000	—	—	—
Farther Supply	1795	— 1,500,000	—	—	—
Vote of Credit	1795	— 2,255,000	—	—	—
			6,275,000	—	—
Exchequer Bills without Interest	-	- - - -	376,739	—	9
			10,522,739	—	9
Treasury Bills of Exchange	-	- - - -	1,649,478	12	5
			£. 12,172,217	13	5

On the 5th January, 1796.

On Supply	-	1790 for Augmentation of the Forces	5,000	—	—
Land Tax	-	1793 — 139,000	—	—	—
Ditto	-	1794 — 307,000	—	—	—
Ditto	-	1795 — 1,649,000	—	—	—
Ditto	-	1796 — 1,500,000	—	—	—
			3,595,000	—	—
Malt	-	1794 — 202,000	—	—	—
Ditto	-	1795 — 750,000	—	—	—
			952,000	—	—
Consol Fund	1795	— 1,265,000	—	—	—
Farther Supply	1795	— 1,500,000	—	—	—
Vote of Credit	1795	— 2,500,000	—	—	—
			5,265,000	—	—
Exchequer Bills without Interest	—	—	376,739	—	9
			10,193,739	—	9
Treasury Bills of Exchange	—	—	794,886	6	7
			£. 10,988,625	9	4

A. NEWLAND, Chief Cashier.

An ACCOUNT, shewing how the Money given for the Service of the year 1795 has been disposed of, distinguished under the several Heads, until the 3d Day of March 1796, and the parts remaining unsatisfied, with the deficiency thereupon.

S E R V I C E S.		Sums voted or granted.	Sums paid	Remain to be paid.
Navy —	For wages and wear and tear of the navy, and the victualling thereof, for 10,000 men, including 15,000 marines, from the 1st day of January 1795	4,940,000 0 0		
	For the ordinary of the navy, including half pay to sea and marine officers, for the year 1795	589,683 3 9		
	Towards the buildings, re-buildings, and repairs of ships of war in His Majesty's and the merchants yards, and other extra works over and above what are proposed to be done upon the heads of wear and tear, and ordinary, for the year 1795	525,840 0 0		
	For ordnance, sea service	— — 260,000 0 0		
	For ordnance, land service	— — 1,176,804 17 9		
Ordnance	For defraying the expence of services performed by the office of ordnance for land service, and not provided for by Parliament, in 1793	34,155 1 9	5,084,545 5 3	970,977 18 6
			6,055,523 3 9	

	Sums voted or granted.	Sums paid	Remain to be paid.
25,357 14 5			
1,045,305 19 8			
39,387 0 3	2,581,010 13 10	1,600,000 0 0	981,010 13 10

Continued.

For defraying the expense of services performed by the office of ordnance for sea service, and not provided for by Parliament, 1793 — —

For defraying the expense of services performed by the office of ordnance for land service, and not provided for by Parliament, in 1794 — —

For defraying the expense of services performed by the office of ordnance for sea service, and not provided for by Parliament, in 1794 — —

#### FORCES, &c.

For defraying the charge of 119,385 effective men, for guards, garrisons, and other His Majesty's land forces in Great Britain, Jersey, and Guernsey, on the Continent, and on board the fleet, including the charge of the pay of commissioned and non-commissioned officers and private men, the charge of cloathing of non-commissioned officers and private men, the charge of agency, and the charge of allowances to be made to captains, pay-

masters, surgeons, riding masters, and for serjeants, from the 25th day of December 1794 to the 24th day of December 1795, both inclusive, being 365 days	2,777,534	19	1
For maintaining His Majesty's forces in the plantations, including those serving at Gibraltar and in Corlica, and a corps of foot in New South Wales, including the charge of the pay of the commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, and private men, the charge of cloathing of the non-commissioned officers and private men, the charge of agency, and the charge of allowances to be made to captains, pay-masters, riding masters, surgeons, and serjeants, from the 25th day of December 1794 to the 24th day of December 1795, inclusive, being 365 days	691,307	15	7
For defraying the difference between the British and Irish pay of six regiments of foot, for service in the West Indies, from the 25th day of December 1794 to the 24th day of December 1795, both inclusive, being 365 days	40,096	9	9
For the pay necessary to be advanced to one regiment of light dragoons, and nine battalions of foot, for service in East India, for the year 1795	8,323	17	10½



Sums voted or granted.	Sums paid	Remain to be paid.
385,000 0 0		
480,000 0 0		
115,820 0 3		
79,978 4 4		

Continued.

For defraying the charge of recruiting, contingencies, and of the allowance of bread and necessaries for His Majesty's land forces, of the allowance of extra feed to the cavalry, in Great Britain, and the charge of poundage to be returned to the infantry, for the year 1795 ———

For defraying the charge of levy money and subsistence, and of the allowance for clothing and accoutrements for the augmentations to be made to His Majesty's forces, in 1795 ———

For the pay of general, and general staff officers, and officers of the hospitals, serving with the forces in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey, and on the Continent, for the year 1795 ———

For defraying the charge of full pay to supernumerary officers of His Majesty's forces, including the officers of independent companies, and of regiments draughted or to be draughted, from the 25th day of December 1794 to the 24th day of December 1795, both inclusive, being 365 days ———

For the allowance of the paymaster general

of His Majesty's forces, to the Secretary at War, to the Commissary General of the musters, to the Judge Advocate General, to the Comptrollers of the Accounts of the Army, their deputies and clerks, including the contingent expences of their respective offices, and for the amount of the Exchequer fees to be paid by the Paymaster General, for the year 1795 —

For the reduced officers of His Majesty's land forces and marines, for the year 1795

For defraying the charge of allowances to the several officers and private gentlemen of the two troops of horse guards reduced, and to the superannuated gentlemen of the four troops of horse guards, for the year 1795 — — —

For the several officers, late in the service of the States General, for the year 1795

For the reduced officers of His Majesty's British American forces, for the year 1795

For defraying the charge of allowances to several reduced officers of His Majesty's British American forces, for the year 1795

For defraying the charge of pensions to be paid to the widows of commissioned officers, and expences attending the same

For defraying the charge of the embodied militia in South Britain, and of several

110,820 78 3

128,864 3 9

135 16 3

1,000 0 0

52,500 0 0

7,500 0 0

10,387 13 3

	Sums voted or granted.			Sums paid.		Remain to be paid.
Continued.						
corps of fencible infantry in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey, and the Isle of Man, for the year 1795 —	930,047	12	3			
For defraying the charge of contingences, of the allowance of bread and necessaries, and of poundage, for the embodied militia, and corps of fencible infantry, in Great Britain, for the year 1795 —	210,000	0	0			
For defraying the charge of cloathing for the embodied militia in South Britain, for the year 1795 —	107,137	11	6			
For defraying the charge of several corps of fencible cavalry, for service in Great Britain, from the 25th day of December 1794 to the 24th day of December 1795, both inclusive, being 365 days —	280,048	8	3			
For defraying the charge of the allowance of bread and necessaries, and of extra feed for the several corps of fencible cavalry, in Great Britain, for the year 1795 —	80,000	0	0			
For defraying the charge of 18,000 Hanoverians, in the pay of Great Britain, for the year 1795 —	495,655	0	0			
For defraying the charge of 12,531 men of the troops of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, in the pay of Great Britain, toge-						

ther with the subsidy for the year 1795, pursuant to the treaty — —	333,253	0	0
For defraying the charge of 3,000 men of the troops of the Landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt, in the pay of Great Britain, together with the subsidy for the year 1795, pursuant to treaty — —	76,076	0	0
For defraying the charge of 2,289 men of the troops of the reigning Duke of Brunswick, together with the subsidy for the year 1795, pursuant to treaty — —	92,242	0	0
For the charge of the several regiments and corps to be raised for the service of Great Britain, in pursuance of an act passed 34 Geo. 3d. cap. 43 — —	427,269	1	6
For defraying the charge of several augmentations to the embodied militia, in the year 1794 — —	23,806	11	5
For defraying the charge of corps transferred from the Irish to the British establishment, for several periods, in the year 1794 — —	246,877	15	0
For defraying the charge of the in and out-pensioners of Chelsea hospital, and the expences of the said hospital, for the year 1795 — —	149,856	15	1
For paying money due to the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, for extraordinary incurred during the late war in America by the Hessian troops employed in the Militia.			

Continued.	Sums voted or granted.	Sums paid.	Amounts to be paid.
service, pursuant to treaty with his Serene Highness — — — — —	68,850 12 04	11,674,358 17 84	11,674,358 17 84
Towards defraying the extraordinary expenses of His Majesty's land forces, and other services, incurred from the 25th day of December 1793 to the 24th day of December 1794 — — — — —	3,063,968 12 4		
To enable His Majesty to make good his engagements with the King of Sardinia — — — — —	200,000 0 0		
For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of Upper Canada, in America, from the 1st day of January to the 31st day of December 1795 — — — — —	7,175 0 0	7,175 0 0	
For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of Nova Scotia, in America, from the 1st day of January to the 31st of December 1795 — — — — —	4,415 0 0	4,415 0 0	
For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of New Brunswick, in America, from the 24th day of June 1795 to the 24th day of June 1796 — — — — —	4,550 0 0	4,550 0 0	
For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the Island of St. John, in America, from the 1st day of January to the 31st day of December 1795 — — — — —	1,900 0 0	1,900 0 0	
For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the Island of Cape Breton, in America, from the 24th day of June 1795 to the 24th day of June 1796 — — — — —	1,800 0 0	1,800 0 0	
For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the Island			

of Newfoundland, from the 1st day of April 1795 to the 1st day of April 1796 — — —  
 For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the Bahama Islands, in addition to the salaries now paid to the public officers out of the duty fund, and other incidental charges attending the same, from the 1st day of January to the 31st day of December 1795 — — —  
 For defraying the charge of the salary of the Chief of Justice of the Bermuda or Somers Islands, from the 24th day of June 1795 to the 24th day of June 1796 — — —  
 For defraying the charge of the salary of the Chief Justice of the island of Dominica, from the 1st day of January to the 31st day of December 1795 — — —  
 For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of New South Wales, from the 10th day of October 1794 to the 10th day of October 1795 — — —  
 For repairing, maintaining, and supporting the British forts and settlements on the coast of Africa — — —  
 For the expences of the new roads of communication, and building bridges, in the Highlands of North Britain, in the year 1795 — — —  
 For defraying the extraordinary expence of His Majesty's mint, from the 1st day of January to the 27th day of July 1794 — — —  
 For defraying the extraordinary expence of His Majesty's mint, from the 28th day of July to the 31st day of December 1794 — — —  
 Towards defraying the expence of making preparation for the marriage of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales — — —

1,232 10 0	1,232 10 0	
4,950 0 0	4,050 0 0	
580 0 0	290 0 0	290 0 0
600 0 0	450 0 0	150 0 0
5,241 0 0	5,241 0 0	
20,000 0 0	20,000 0 0	
4,500 0 0	3,000 0 0	1,500 0 0
5,682 2 4	5,682 2 4	
1,386 2 6	1,386 2 6	
27,500 0 0	27,500 0 0	

For defraying the expence of completing the works at Carleton House	25,000	0	0	25,000	0	0
To be issued and paid to the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, to be by them placed to the account of the Commissioners for the reduction of the national debt	200,000	0	0	200,000	0	0
For the Board of Agriculture, for the service of 1795	3,000	0	0	3,000	0	0
To be applied in support of an institution called the Veterinary College	1,500	0	0	1,500	0	0
For monies due to the representatives of the late Richard Oswald, Esq; as contractor for supplying bread and waggons to the allied army in Germany, under the command of Prince Ferdinand of Brunwick, between September 1758 and March 1763	41,688	14	6 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	41,688	14	6 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
For Thomas Baucutt Mafh, for the like sum advanced by him for the first five payments towards the lottery 1794, and become forfeited by omitting to make the future payments (voted 52 <i>l.</i> 16 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> but satisfied with)	511	17	6	511	17	6
To John Farhill, Esq. Secretary to the Commissioners for the reduction of the national debt, for salaries of the officers, and incidental expences of that commission	1,488	13	6	1,488	13	6
For the payment of such part of the principal and interest thereupon as shall become due on or before the 10th day of October 1795, on all orders made out, pursuant to an act 28th Geo. 3 <i>d.</i> for giving relief to such persons as have suffered in their rights and properties during the late unhappy dissensions in America; and for making compensation to such						

persons as have suffered by the cession of East Florida to the King of Spain ——— ——— ———  
 For the payment of such part of the principal and interest thereupon as shall become due on or before the 10th day of October 1795, on all the orders made out, pursuant to an act 30th Geo. 3d. for giving relief to such persons as have suffered in their rights and properties during the late unhappy dissensions in America; and for making compensation to such persons as have suffered by the cession of East Florida to the King of Spain ——— ——— ———  
 To John Wilmot, Esq. late one of the commissioners for American claims, for a clerk employed to deliver out certificates signed by the said Commissioners ——— ——— ———  
 For rewards to the officers of the exchequer, for managing, directing, and paying the orders made out for the relief of the American sufferers, &c. al. ——— ——— ———  
 To make good the like sum, which has been issued by His Majesty's orders, in pursuance of the addresses of the House of Commons ——— ——— ———  
 To make good the like sum, which has been issued in consequence of the expences incurred in carrying on the prosecution against Warren Hastings, Esq. ——— ——— ———  
 To make good the like sum, which has been issued for the expence of sundry articles sent to the settlement in New South Wales, and the amount of bills drawn, and of other expences incurred, on account of the convicts at that settlement ——— ——— ———  
 To make good the like sum, which has been issued to Duncan

204,549	6	1	203,028	18	0	1,510	8	0½
55,091	17	6	51,434	9	8	3,657	7	10
132	5	6	132	5	6			
1,160	0	0	1,160	0	0			
47,649	1	5	47,649	1	5			
4,794	6	6	4,794	6	6			
6,958	8	4	6,958	8	5			



granted.	Sums paid.	paid.
11,463 13 8	11,463 13 8	
15,440 5 11½	15,440 5 11½	
24,500 0 0	24,500 0 0	
1,059 14 9	1,059 14 0	
98,410 0 0	98,410 0 0	
37,500 0 0	37,500 0 0	
24,335 18 0	24,335 18 0	

Continued.

Campbell, Esq. for the expence of confining, maintaining, and employing convicts on the river Thames — — —  
 To make good the like sum, which has been issued to James Bradley, Esq. for the expence of maintaining, and guarding convicts in Langton and Portsmouth harbours, &c. — — —  
 To make good the like sum, which has been issued at the receipt of the exchequer to Thomas Cotton, Esq. out of His Majesty's civil list revenues, for defraying the expence of allowances for the relief of American civil officers, and others who have suffered on account of their attachment to His Majesty's Government — — —  
 To make good the like sum, issued to William Chinnery, Esq. to be by him paid over to certain French proprietors of the island of St. Domingo, to enable them to go there — — —  
 To make good the like sum, issued to John Wilmot, Esq. et al. members of the committee for the relief of the suffering clergy and laity of France — — —  
 To make good the like sum, issued to ditto, from the 13th day of February 1795, for the support, cloathing, maintaining, &c. of the suffering clergy and laity of France, and to sundry persons, formerly officers of marine, or in the magistracy of France — — —  
 To make good the like sum, issued at the receipt of the Exchequer, for His Majesty's service abroad, between the 5th day of January 1794 and the 5th day of January 1795 — — —  
 To make good the like sum, issued to William Chinnery, Esq.

468 16 1	468 16 0
1,089 6 2½	1,089 6 2½
869 19 0	869 19 0
2,823 10 5	2,823 10 5
4,069 2 0	4,069 2 0
182,500 8 7	182,500 8 7

to enable him to discharge claims for fees on escheats and forfeitures in the Province of Nova Scotia, and for other services

To make good the like sum, issued to William Pollock and William Huskisson, Esqs. for an allowance to a superintendent appointed to attend the business arising out of an act, passed in the last session of Parliament, for establishing regulations respecting aliens arriving in this kingdom, or resident therein, from the 10th of January 1793 to the 11th of July 1794, and for expenses of printing in consequence of the said act

To make good the like sum, issued to Thomas Evance, Esq. as an allowance to himself, and Thomas Brodie, for continuing and perfecting the index to the Journals of the House of Lords

To make good the sum, issued to the representatives of William Blackburn, Esq. as a compensation for his trouble in making designs for the penitentiary houses intended to be built at the public expense, and for other business relative thereto, and to Jeremy Bentham, Esq. to enable him to make preparations for the custody and care of the convicts proposed to be confined therein

To make good the like sum, issued to James Willis, Esq. to be applied with a view to the forming an establishment in Africa for the purpose of opening a commercial intercourse with the interior parts of that continent

To make good the deficiency of the malt duty, granted for the service of the year 1793, at Lady Day 1795

To make good the deficiency of the land tax, granted for the

Deficiencies

	Sums voted or granted.	Sums paid.	Remain to be paid.
	139,234 14 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	139,234 14 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	
	848,915 4 2 $\frac{3}{4}$	848,915 4 2 $\frac{3}{4}$	
	744,057 11 1	744,057 11 1	
	14,826 14 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	14,826 14 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	
	2,097,652 14 3	2,097,652 14 3	
	1,561,406 5 0	1,561,406 5 0	
	2,601,790 14 7	2,601,790 14 7	
	342 18 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	342 18 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	

Continued.

service of the year 1793, at Michaelmas 1795 —  
To complete the sum of 2,697,000l. granted to His Majesty  
out of the consolidated fund, for the service of the year 1794

Deficiencies { To make good the deficiency of the grants for the service of  
the year 1794 — — —

To make good the deficiency of the consolidated fund, on the  
5th day of January 1796 — — —

To pay off and discharge the principal sum of 2,000,000l. in  
Exchequer bills made out by virtue of an act 34th Geo. 3d.  
and charged upon the first supplies to be granted in Parlia-  
ment, for the service of the year 1795, together with the  
interest and charges attending the same — — —

To pay off and discharge the principal sum of 1,500,000 in  
Exchequer bills made out by virtue of one other act 34th  
Geo. 3d. and charged farther upon the first aids to be granted  
in Parliament for the service of the year 1795, together  
with the interest and charges attending the same — — —

To pay off and discharge the principal sum of 2,500,000l.  
in Exchequer bills made out by virtue of an act 34th Geo.  
3d. for the uses and purposes therein mentioned, and charg-  
ed upon the first aids to be granted in the next session of Par-  
liament, together with the interest and charges attending the  
same — — —

To the Usher of the Exchequer, for necessaries furnished the  
Exchequer Bill office, &c. — — —

To the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, for

receiving, paying, and accounting for 18,000,000*l.* raised by annuities for the service of the year 1795  
 To ditto for discount on prompt payments to the contributors of the said 18,000,000  
 To ditto, to be by them distributed and paid to and among the proprietors of the several fortunate tickets in a lottery for raising 758,541*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* for the service of the year 1795  
 To ditto, for receiving the contributions to the said lottery, paying the prizes, &c. and for discounts on prompt payments to the several contributors  
 For the charges and expenses in preparing and drawing the said lottery, and for taking in tickets, and delivering out certificates in lieu thereof  
 To enable His Majesty to defray any extraordinary expenses which may be incurred for the service of the year 1795, and to take such measures as the exigency of affairs may require

£. s. d.

Whereof hath been issued to the Paymaster General of

His Majesty's forces ——— 2,200,000 0 0  
 To the Treasurer of His Majesty's navy ——— 171,373 1 11  
 To the Treasurer of His Majesty's ordnance ——— 40,000 0 0  
 To the Bank of England, to pay bills of exchange drawn by Claude Scott, Esq., ——— 88,626 18 1

2,500,000 0 0

14,504	5	•	14,504	5	0
315,472	12	11	315,472	12	11
500,000	0	0			500,000 0 0
1,732	14	5	1,732	14	5
12,000	0	0	1,500	•	0
10,500	0	0			10,500 0 0
2,500,000	0	0	2,500,000	0	0
32,751,496	4	12	30,281,889	15	11½
					2,469,6068 2½

Continued.

Towards satisfying the same,

There remains in the Exchequer of contributions to the lottery

To be raised on the consolidated fund — — — —

Deficiency of Ways and Means to answer the services

Sums paid.	Remain to be paid.
16,948 5 8½	121,651 17 4½
104,703 11 8½	2,347,954 10 9½

WAYS and MEANS for answering the same ; viz.

£. s. d. *℔*.

2,000,000 0 0 By 4 per Lib. on land.

750,000 0 0 By the duty on malt, continued Anno 1795.

18,000,000 0 0 By annuities.

758,541 13 4 By a lottery.

2,895,000 0 0 Out of the produce of the consolidated fund.

2,000,000 0 0 By Exchequer bills, charged upon the first aids granted for the service of the year 1796.

1,500,000 0 0 By Exchequer bills, charged farther on ditto

2,500,000 0 0 By Exchequer bills, charged upon the first aids granted for the service of the year 1796.

30,403,541 13 4

2,347,954 10 9½ Deficiency of the Ways and Means.

32,751,496 4 1½

## Memorandum.

The arrears of former supplies remaining unpaid, for which money is provided, are as follow; viz.

For the late African Company's creditors	—	—	—	—	960	12	10
For Georgia bills, residue of 15,496l. 19s. 1½	—	—	—	—	570	17	7½
To make good the deficiency of the duty of 4 & ½ per cent. granted anno 1785	—	—	—	—	816	13	5½
To complete 600l. granted anno 1788, for the salary of the Chief Justice of Dominica	—	—	—	—	177	1	0
To pay principal and interest of orders made out pursuant to an act 28th Geo. 3d. for the relief of American sufferers, and persons who have suffered by the cession of East Florida, and charged on supplies, anno 1789	—	—	—	—	733	4	4½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to the said act, and charged upon the supplies, anno 1790	—	—	—	—	396	17	9½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 30th Geo. 3d. and charged on ditto	—	—	—	—	163	14	10
To pay ditto made out pursuant to the act 28th Geo. 3d. and charged on the supplies anno 1791	—	—	—	—	529	0	2½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 30th Geo. 3d. and charged on ditto	—	—	—	—	5014	10	10½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 28th Geo. 3d. and charged on the supplies anno 1792	—	—	—	—	655	12	8½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 30th Geo. 3d. and charged on ditto	—	—	—	—	3,260	12	3½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 28th Geo. 3d. and charged on the supplies anno 1793	—	—	—	—	861	15	10½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 30th Geo. 3d. and charged on ditto	—	—	—	—	3,183	5	2½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 28th Geo. 3d. and charged on the supplies anno 1794	—	—	—	—	1,188	1	2½
To pay ditto made out pursuant to an act 30th Geo. 3d. and charged on ditto	—	—	—	—	3,549	15	4
For the civil establishment of Cape Breton, charged on the supplies anno 1791	—	—	—	—	1,600	0	0
For Salaries to the Officers of the Bahama Islands ditto	—	—	—	—	2,014	0	0
For ditto to the Chief Justice of Dominica, charged on the supplies anno 1793	—	—	—	—	115	1	5
					<hr/>		
					25,730	17	0½

Presented the 3d day of March 1796, by

*W. Sperr.*

A Particular Account of the application of the several sums included in the account (presented to the House upon the 4th day of December last) of the distribution of the money granted by an act, made in the last session of Parliament, for enabling His Majesty to raise the sum of two millions five hundred thousand pounds, for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Dates of Warrants.	Governor and Company of the Bank of England on account of the Paymaster of the Forces.			
1795.				
March 17th.	To C. Scott, Esq. for the purchase of 19,994 sacks of English flour	—	43,621	1
June 9th.	To J. Brickwood, Esq. to repay the like sum advanced by him towards purchasing wheat in Canada, and expences in chartering ships to bring the same to this country	— 7,015 18 11		
Sep. 15th.	To ditto, for ditto service	— 22,000 0 0		
August 8th.	To A. Davison, Esq. to be applied in payment of bills drawn by Mons. de Puyfage, for provisions purchased for the use of the troops	— 20,000 0 0	29,015 18 11	
Sep. 1st.	To ditto, for ditto service	— 7,239 8 5		
	To ditto, for ditto service	— 3,146 18 8		
21d.	To ditto, for ditto service	— 9,004 11 0		
May 4th.	To bills of exchange drawn by A. Davison, Esq. superintendant and director of forage, &c. of the army under the command of the Earl of Moira, for public services; in part of a warrant of this date for 94,113l. 8s. 1d.	— 35,354 16 11	39,390 18 1	
July 13th.	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 20,215 12 3		
October 15th.	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service	— 93,025 14 1	148,576 3 3	

March 28th.	To ditto drawn by B. Watson, Esq. superintendant and director of forage, provisions, necessaries, and extraordinaries of the army on the Continent, for public service; in part of a warrant of this date for 721,714l. 8s. 5d. 126,835 0 0	
April 27th.	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service; in part of a warrant of this date for 692,903l. 5s. — 583,081 3 5	
Sep. 19th.	To ditto, drawn by ditto, for ditto service; in part of a warrant of this date for 355,989l. 11s. 7d. — 130,549 0 0	
June 2d.	To bills of Exchange drawn by John Erskine, Esq. superintendant and director of forage, provisions, necessaries, and extraordinaries of the army serving in the Mediterranean, for public services; in part of a warrant of this date for 148,863l. 1s. 9d. 89,600 6 7	840,465 3 5
July 13th.	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service — 58,600 0 0	
August 20th.	To ditto drawn by ditto for ditto service 14,669 19 9	
October 15th.	To ditto drawn by ditto, for ditto service — 60,981 18 8	
June 5th.	To ditto drawn by Lord Hood, Sir G. Elliot, Bart. and David Dundas, Esq. late Commissioners at Toulon, for public services; in part of a warrant of this date for 160,476l. 19s — 20,855 19 0	223,852 5 0
August 20th.	To ditto drawn by Sir G. Elliot, Bart. for ditto service — 30,700 0 0	
	To ditto drawn by Sir Adam Williamson, Lieutenant Governor of Jamaica, for ditto service —	51,555 19 0
June 22d.	To ditto drawn by Captain D'Auvergne, Prince of Bouillion, Lieutenant Governor of Jersey, for ditto service — 8,700 0 0	218,946 12 0



August 20th.	To ditto drawn by ditto for ditto service —	4,660 0 0		
			13,360	0 0
1794.	To ditto drawn by C. Nesbitt, In- specter General of foreign corps on the Continent, for ditto service —	18,835	0 0	
December 31st	To Baron de Alvensleben, for the annual expence of an additional number of bāt horses for the Hano- verian troops —	2,002 0 4		
1795.	January 19th To ditto for the first expence of pon- toons, pay of Ha- noverian engineers and train belong- ing to the pon- toons, from the 15th May to 31st December 1794, and extra allow- ance for recruit- ing, and towards replacing horses killed in action in the first campaign and to 31st De- cember 1793 —	20,724 0 8		
			22,726	1 0
28th.	To Messrs. Ross and Ogilvie, for sub- sistence of a corps of Loyal French Emigrants, from 25th December 1794 to 23d Fe- bruary 1795 —	1,793 18 2		
June 5th.	To ditto, for ditto, from 24th Febru- ary to 24th June 1795 —	3,299 10 4		
Nov. 12th.	To ditto, for ditto, from 25th June to 24th August 1795 —	2,370 14 8		
			7,464	3 2
Date of Treasury Letter.				
Feb. 17th.	To Compte de Carnéville, on account of levy money and subsistence of his corps for the year 1795 —		300	0 0
Dates of Warrants.				
Jan. 31st.	To Thomas Bainbridge, Esq. in part satisfaction of demands by the king- dom of Ireland for levy money for men and horses of the old establish- ed corps, for off-reckonings to pro- vide accoutrements, for horse fur-			

	niture, levy money and accountrements of the artillery, for arms and other military services for sundry regiments embarked from that country — —	100,000	9	0
July 22d.	To the Commissioners for detained ships to be applied for the payment of wages due to the crews of Dutch ships — —	25,000	0	0
30th.	To Messrs. Boyd, Benfield, and Co. for 190,000 ounces of Spanish dollars, purchased by them for the use of the forces — —	49,399	10	6
Feb. 28th.	To Sir G. Elliot, Bart. for an allowance from 2d October 1793 to 1st of Nov. 1794, as late one of the Commissioners in superintending, &c. the civil affairs and concerns of all such places and districts as should be occupied by His Majesty's arms in France — —	9,028	11	5
July 13th	To Edward Blakeney, Esq. for 1,096 days allowance to 31st December 1794, for his faithful services in the island of Minorca, and during the late War in Germany; transferred from the revenue of Gibraltar, on which the pension was charged, on account of the deficiency of that fund — —	1,096	0	0
	For providing and fitting up temporary barracks for the troops in those situations on the coast where the publicans could not have furnished them with quarters; and for bedding, furniture, utensils, coals, candles, beer, &c. for the cavalry and infantry stationed therein —	314,197	0	0
April 1st.	To Messrs. John and G. F. Carleton, account for embarkations, &c. of troops at different ports in the kingdom of Ireland — 25,000	0	0	
July 19th.	To ditto for ditto service — 15,000	0	0	
1794		40,000	0	0
July 28th.	To Lieut. J. C. Searle, of the brig Liberty, for expences incurred by him in conveying to and from England, Guernsey, and Jersey, several French emigrants —	100	0	0
Dec. 31st.	To sundry persons for losses on corn, prohibited to be exported by an order of Council, &c. —	462	5	8

1795.

Feb. 26.	To sundry ditto for ditto, in consequence of the embargo laid upon corn vessels — — —	158	11	9
April 2d.	To William Chinnery, Esq. to be by him paid over to four Corsican Deputies, appointed to submit the form of a Constitution to His Majesty's consideration — —	2,094	11	•
June 2d.	To William Morley, for loss sustained under the proclamation prohibiting the exportation of naval stores —	444	•	9

Dates of Treasury Letter.	Governor and Company of the Bank of England on account of the Treasurer of the Navy.
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1795.

Nov. 10th.	To pay imprests and other demands on account of the transport service	25,000	•	•
	To pay bills of exchange on account of the victualling service —	58,000	•	•
	To pay for medicines, &c. for hospitals and hospital ships —	20,000	•	•
	To pay seamen's wages — —	20,000	•	•
12th.	To be imprested to the Hon. George Villiers, on account of the marine service — —	7,000	•	•
	To carry on payments and recalls on the head of wages —	25,000	•	•
17th.	To pay bills for pilotage —	373	1	11
	To pay for the subsistence, &c. of prisoners of war at home —	10,000	•	•
	To pay for the subsistence, &c. of prisoners of war abroad —	6,000	•	•
		<hr/>		
		£.	171,373	1 11
		<hr/>		

William Smith, Esq. Treasurer  
of the Ordnance.

Imprested to sundry storekeepers of His Majesty's Ordnance, at Waltham Abbey, Gravesend, North Yarmouth, Woolwich, Keyham Point, Chatham, Purfleet, Plymouth, Fort George, Faversham, Hull, Scarbro', and Berwick, for expences in their respective departments —	13,612	8	•
Ditto for the payment of bills of exchange — — —	10,669	17	10

Ditto to the Agent of the Royal regiment of Artillery, on account of the said regiment	8,682	15	1
Ditto to the Agent of the corps of Royal Engineers, and Royal Military Artificers, on account of the said corps	1,579	4	2
Ditto to the superintendant of Ordnance transports, on account of the Expedition transport	2,200	0	0
Ditto to the Agent of the corps of Captain Commissaries and drivers, on account of the said corps	3,208	17	0
	<hr/>		
	£.	39,953	2 1
Balance carried to the credit of the public		46	17 11
	<hr/>		
	£.	40,000	0 0
	<hr/>		

Governor and Company of the Bank of England, to reimburse the like sums paid by them for bills of exchange drawn upon Claude Scott, Esq. for the purchase of several cargoes of foreign corn	88,626	18	1
	<hr/>		

## RECAPITULATION.

Governor and Company of the Bank of England, on account of the Paymaster of Forces	2,200,000	0	0
Ditto on account of—Treasurer of the Navy	171,373	1	11
Ditto on account of—Treasurer of Ordnance	40,000	0	0
Ditto to pay bills of exchange drawn on Claude Scott, Esq.	88,626	18	1
	<hr/>		
	£.	2,500,000	0 0
	<hr/>		

Whitehall, Treasury Chambers,  
the 8th day of March 1796.

GEORGE ROSE.

An Account of all Sums of Money granted by Parliament since the 29th day of October 1795, and expended before the 5th day of April 1796 : with a Statement of the Services to which the same were applied.

The Sums granted by Parliament within the above period were as follows ; viz.

By virtue of an act for granting an aid to His Majesty by a land tax, for the service of the year 1796	—	2,000,000
By ditto for granting the duties on malt, &c. for the service of the year 1796	—	750,000
By ditto for raising the sum of 18,000,000 <i>l.</i> for the service of the year 1796	—	18,000,000
By ditto for raising a certain sum of money by loans or Exchequer bills, for the service of the year 1796	—	2,000,000
By ditto for raising a farther sum of Money by loans or Exchequer bills, for the service of the year 1796	—	1,500,000
By ditto for raising the sum of 2,500,000 <i>l.</i> for the uses and purposes therein mentioned	—	2,500,000

£.26,750,000

Out of which has been issued the sum of 12,171,182*l.* 1*rs.* 7½*d.* for the following services ; viz.

	Out of Exchequer Bills charged on the land tax Anno 1796.			Out of Exchequer Bills charged on the malt tax Anno 1796.			Out of Contributions to Annuities, Anno 1796. for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.			TOTAL.
	l.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.	l.	s.	d.	
To the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, on account of the Paymaster General of His Majesty's forces	1,218,623	16	7							
To the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, on account of the Treasurer of His Majesty's navy	721,576	3	5							
To William Smith, Esq. Treasurer of His Majesty's Ordnance	60,000	0	0							
	2,000,000	0	0							
				750,000	0	0				
							5,896,439	19	9½	
				750,000	0	0	341,900	0	0	8,206,963 16 4½
							3,064,742	11	10	3,786,118 15 3
							460,000	0	0	520,000 0 0
				750,000	0	0	341,900			12,513,082 11 7½

Exchequer, the 26th day of April 1796.

ANTHONY GELL, Jun.

Navy Office, the 22d April, 1796.

An Account of Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills, registered  
since the 31st December, 1795:

			£.	s.	d.
Navy Bills	—	—	1,017,230	12	8
Victualling Bills	—	—	1,049,395	11	6
Transport Bills	—	—	755,763	10	4
		Total	£. 2,822	389	14 6

The whole, amounting to the sum of Two Millions, Eight Hundred, and Twenty-two Thousand, Three Hundred, and Eighty-nine Pounds, Fourteen Shillings and Six-pence.

Examined R. P.

A. S. HAMMOND.

WM. RULE.

GEO. MARSH.

GEO. ROGERS.

W. PALMER.

W. BELLINGHAM.

Return to an Order of the Honourable House of Commons, dated 8th day of April 1796, " For an Account of the Exchequer  
 " Bills issued on the vote of Credit granted for the service of  
 " the year 1796, with the expence attending the same; and  
 " distinguishing the amount issued to discharge Arrears due on  
 " the 1st December 1795.

The Exchequer Bills issued on the Vote of Credit for 1796.

For Ordnance Services	—	£. 500,000 — —
Of which has been fold	£. 281,500 — —	
Expence attending the sale	15,875 18 10	
Applied to the discharge of		
Arrears due for Ord-		
nance services, on or be-		
fore the 1st of Decem-		
ber, 1795	265,624 1 2	

The Exchequer Bills issued to the Paymaster Ge-	—	—	430,200 — —
neral of the Forces			
To discharge off-reckonings			
due on 1st of December,			
1795	172,100 — —		
Issued for the Current Ser-			
vice of the army for 1796	174,800 — —		
Remaining unissued in the			
hands of the Paymaster-			
General	83,300 — —		
	£. 430,200 — —		

N. B. The expence attending the Exchequer Bills, issued by the Paymaster of the Forces, is to be allowed to the persons to whom they have been paid; but the amount cannot at present be ascertained, as no account of it has been delivered.

Whitehall Treasury Chambers,  
 22d April 1796.

CHARLES LONG.

An Account of the total net produce of the Taxes for one year, ended the 5th day of April, 1796.

	£	s	d
Customs	3,247,752	18	9
Excise	6,764,498	18	1½
Stamps	1,190,985	12	7

## INCIDENTS.

	£	s	d
Confol. Letter Money, 1787	159,000		
Ditto Salt	421,576	0	2½
Seizures, 1760	22,443	17	4½
Profers, ditto	622	12	2
Alum mines, ditto	960		
Compositions, ditto	1	3	4
Alienation duty, ditto	1,924	8	3
Sixpence deduction on pensions, 1721	44,951		
One shilling ditto salaries, &c. 1758	28,718		
Houses and windows, 1766	327,519	1	3½
Houses, 1779	132,104	15	6
Hawkers and pedlars, 1710	3,999	18	10
Hackney coaches and chairs, 1711	11,500		
Ditto, 1784	13,800		
Male servants, 1785	88,533	9	5½
Female ditto (arrears) ditto	99	15	3½
Horses, ditto	105,846	15	2
Four-wheeled carriages, ditto	150,025	18	7
Two-wheeled ditto ditto	39,466	9	1½
Waggons (arrears) ditto	92	15	3½
Carts, ditto ditto	80	4	11½
Shops, ditto ditto			
First fruits of the clergy	4,305	14	1½
Tiths ditto	9,959	3	1½
Men servants (arrears) 1777	9	9	
Lottery licences, 1794	1,748	2	8
Letter money, 1760	286,000		

## DUTIES, 1791.

	£	s	d
Sugar	207,874	2	6
British spirits	82,379		
Foreign ditto	82,802		
Malt	40	12	
Bills and receipts	173,679	8	10
Game duty	15,664	9	2
£.10 per cent.	81,437	5	½
	641,876	17	6½



## DUTIES, 1794.

British spirits	83,887		
Foreign ditto	86,810		
Glaſs	40,843		
Attorneies articles	17,607	13	6
Bricks (excife)	53,216		
Slates and ſtones	9,381	11	3½
Bricks (customs)	310	3	3
Paper (excife)	154,110		
Ditto customs	4,709	0	4
Spirits licences	87,000		

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537,874 8 4½

## DUTIES, 1795.

British Spirits	78,936		
Foreign ditto	84,671		
Wine	923,326		
Cocoa	18,242		
Sweets	8,601		
Stamps	26,998	15	8
Ship polices	51,123	19	
Hair powder certificates	197,232	15	
Receipts	6,880		
Fruit	65,978	12	8
Coals	192	4	9½
Tea	186,434		

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1,648,616 7 1½

## DUTIES, 1796.

Tobacco	40,338		
Horse Dealers licences	240		
Salt	8,000		

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48,578

Total of customs, excise, and stamps	11,203,237	9	5½
Total of Incidents	1,855,283	0	5½
Total of duties, 1791	641,876	17	6½
1794	537,874	8	4½
1795	1,648,616	7	1½
1796	48,578		

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Grand total 15,985,466 2 11½

Exchequer, the 8th  
day of April 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of the income of the Consolidated Fund, for the  
quarter ending 5th April, 1795.

Consolidated duties of customs	765,934	5	11
Ditto excise	1,443,750		
Ditto stamps	320,816		
Ditto salt	82,466	17	3
Ditto letter money	100,000		
Seizures, since 25th October 1760	1,331		
Profers, ditto	30	10	2
Rent of alum mines, ditto	480		
Rent of a light house, ditto	6	13	4
Compositions, ditto	16	8	
Deduction of 6d. per lib. on pensions, since 24th June 1721	8,626		
Ditto 1s. on salaries and pensions, since 5th April 1758	6,337	11	0½
Duty on houses and windows, since 10th October 1766	38,325	17	1½
Inhabited houses, since 5th July 1779	24,839	11	7½
Duty on hawkers and pedlars, since 23d June 1710	150		
Ditto on hackney coaches and chairs, since 1st August 1711	5,500		
Ditto on male servants, since 5th July 1785	11,575	18	5½
Ditto on horses, since 29th September 1784	12,778	3	7½
Ditto on four wheel carriages, since 5th July 1785	24,413	16	11½
Ditto on two wheel carriages, ditto	6,805	7	11½
Duty on British spirits, since 5th January 1791	33,615		
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	42,714		
Reserved out of bills of exchange and receipts, since 1st August 1791	36,763		
Duty on British spirits, since 21st February 1794	38,236		
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	44,094		
Ditto on attornies articles, since 5th February 1794	4,794		
Ditto on bricks and tiles (excise), since 28th March 1794	6,690		
Ditto ditto (customs), since ditto	100	9	8
Ditto on slates and stones, &c. ditto, since 9th May 1794	703	2	2½
Ditto on paper (excise), since 5th April 1794	18,750		
Surplus of ditto	21,401		
Duty on paper (customs), since ditto	1,000	13	4
Ditto on glass, since 17th April 1794	12,243		
Ditto on distillers licences, since ditto	9,000		
Surplus of ditto	6,000		
Duty on British spirits, since 23d February 1795	507		
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	110		
Ditto on cocoa and coffee, since 16th March 1795	674		
Ditto on wines, since 23d February 1795	13,332		

Compositions paid by the Bank of England in lieu  
of the stamp duty on notes and bills issued by  
them — — —

6,000

Imprest money repaid by John Dalley Esq. Secre-  
tary to the Commissioners appointed to inquire  
into the emoluments of the officers of customs

12 0 8½

Money repaid by John Charlton Esq. late agent to  
a corps of invalids — — —

271

l. s. d.

Arrears of the duty on female ser-  
vants — — —

77 3 1

Ditto waggons — — —

27 12 11

Ditto carts — — —

18 6 10½

Ditto 54th 4s. aid, anno 1790

4,194 8 7½

Ditto 56th ditto 1792

1,378 17 3½

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 5,696 8 9½

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 3,177,075 4 10
 

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Exchequer,  
the 15th day of April 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of the charges upon the Consolidated Fund, for the quarter ending 5th April 1795.

EXCHEQUER.

Annuities 2-7ths excise for two and three lives for three months, due 5th April 1795	—	—	2,048	18	0
3,700l. per week, with the salaries to the officers of the receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer for three months, due 5th April 1795	—	—	7,957	11	8
anno 1706 with ditto	—	for ditto	6,181	2	10½
1707 with ditto	—	for ditto	2,038	0	6½
per 1st act 1708 with ditto	—	for ditto	1,229	13	1½
2d act 1708 with ditto	—	for ditto	2,649	6	3½
Annuities on lives with benefit of survivorship in classes, by act 29 Geo. III.	—	for six months, due ditto	270	—	—
	—	—	21,431	0	6

SOUTH SEA COMPANY.

Annuity and management on 24,065,084l. 13s. 11½d. their present capital, for three months, due 5th April 1795

183,993 13 54

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annuity on 53,750,000l. four per cent. consolidated annuities for six months, due 5th April 1795

655,000

7,368 15

for ditto

662,368 15

Annuity on 2,750,000l. granted by an act 24 Geo. III. for six months, due the said 5th April 1795

55,000

To such of the contributors for raising 18,000,000l. for the service of the year 1795, as completed their whole payments of 2,012,208l. 6s. 8d. on or before the 2d April 1795, which annuities are by the act 35 Geo. III. directed to be consolidated with the above four per cent. annuities, for six months, due ditto

40,244 3 4

757,612 18 4

Annuities for thirty and twenty-nine years, by acts 18 and 19 Geo. III. for six months, due 5th April 1795 — — — — —  
 Management on ditto for ditto — — — — —

202,165 14 2½  
 2,274 7 3½  
 —————  
 204,440 1 5½

Annuities for eighteen years three quarters, by act 29 Geo. III. for six months, due ditto — — — — —  
 Management on ditto for ditto — — — — —

7,000 16 3  
 78 15 2  
 —————  
 7,079 11 5

Annuity on long terms, consolidated by several acts of Parliament, for six months, due 5th April 1795 — — — — —  
 Management on ditto for ditto — — — — —

352,370 2 6  
 3,964 3 3½  
 —————  
 356,334 5 9½

Annuities granted by the act 34 Geo. III. for sixty-fix years and a quarter, for six months, due 5th April 1795 — — — — —  
 To such of the contributors for raising 18,000,000l. for the service of the year 1795, as have made good their whole payments on or before the 2d day of April 1795, for six months annuity due 5th April 1795, on the annuities which were granted by an act 35 Geo. III. for sixty-five years and one quarter, and which were directed by the said act to be added to, and made one joint stock with the before-mentioned annuities — — — — —

— — — — —  
 31,395 16 8

Annuity on 37,340,073l. 16s. 4d. three per cent. reduced annuities for six months, due 5th April 1795 — — — — —  
 Management on ditto, after abating the sum of 842l. 12s. 6d. being after the rate of 450l. per million on the principal sum of 3,745,000l. purchased by the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt, before 10th of October 1794 — — — — —

560,101 3 1½  
 — — — — —  
 12,208 18 5  
 —————  
 567,659 19 11½

211,519 13 10½

399,939 0 10½

Annuitv and management on 4,200,000 <i>l.</i> the amount of East-India annuities, which have been added to the above capital of 37,343,073 <i>l.</i> 16 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> by an act 33 Geo. III. for six months annuity, due 5th April 1795	63,945	
On the capital stock of 6,250,000 <i>l.</i> three per cent annuities, created in respect of 4,500,000 <i>l.</i> borrowed pursuant to an act 33 Geo. III. for three months, due 5th April 1795, after the rate of 1 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum and is to be placed to the account of the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt	15,625	631,604 19 11½
On the capital stock of 11,000,000 <i>l.</i> three per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. for the same time, to be placed to the account of said Commissioners	27,500	
On the capital stock of 2,750,000 four per cent. annuities, created by the said act, for same time, to be placed to the account of the said Commissioners	6,875	
On the sum of 9,680 <i>l.</i> per annum, being 1 <i>l.</i> per cent. on the future actual value of the annuity of 11 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> per cent. on the afore-mentioned 11,000,000 <i>l.</i> granted for sixty-six years and three months by the last-mentioned act, at the end of forty-five years, reckoning the same at the rate of 3 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum for the same time, to be placed to the account of the said Commissioners	2,420	
On the capital stock of 1,926,000 <i>l.</i> 12 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> five per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. in lieu of navy and victualling bills delivered up to be cancelled, at the rate of 1 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum for same time, to be placed to the account of the said Commissioners	4,816 16 3	57,236 6 3
Annuities granted anno 1777 for ten years, amounting to the sum of 25,000 <i>l.</i> per annum, which ceased upon the 5th day of April 1787, and are to be placed to the account of the said Commissioners, for six months, due 5th April 1795	—	12,500 0 0
Annuities granted by the acts of the 4th and 5th of King William and Queen Mary, and charged upon the 9 <i>d.</i> per barrel excise (commonly called 14 per cents.) which ceased upon the 5th February 1793, and is to be placed to the account of the said Commissioners,	12,128 15 7½	

Annuities granted by the acts of the 5th and 6th of the same reign, for ninety-six years, commonly called tonnage, and which ceased on the said 5th February 1792, and is to be placed to the account of the said Commissioners

	1,591	8	0
Bank of England on their capital of 3,200,000l. at 3l. per cent. per annum for three months, due 12th February 1795	13,720	3	7½
Ditto on 4,000,000l. purchased of the South Sea Company, for three months, due 5th April 1795	25,000		
Ditto on 500,000l. at 3 per cent. per annum for ditto	39,474	10	10½
Ditto on 1,250,000l. ditto for ditto	3,750		
Ditto on 1,750,000l. ditto for ditto	9,375		
Ditto on 986,800l. ditto for ditto	13,125		
To the several judges of England and Wales on their several additional allowances, for three months, due 5th April 1795	7,401		
To Ann Cals, late office keeper in the office for managing the former duties on wine licences, for ditto	3,262	10	0
To Edward Roberts Esq. first clerk to the Clerk of the Pells, on the allowance of 640l. per annum, formerly paid to the Auditor of the Receipt of the Exchequer for salaries to the officers of the Exchequer Bill Office, and now payable to him per act 23 Geo. III. for ditto	5		
To the support of His Majesty's household, for three months, due ditto	162	10	
To His Royal Highness the Duke of York, on his annuity	224,500		
due ditto			
To Her Royal Highness the Dutchess of York	3,500		
To His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence	1,000		
To His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester	3,000		
To ditto	2,250		
To the representatives of Arthur Onslow Esq.	2,000		
To the Earl of Chatham	750		
To Lord Rodney	1,000		
	500		

To Lord Heathfield	—	—	1,500l. for ditto	—	375
To the Earl of Bute	—	—	7,000l. for ditto	—	1,750
To Philip Deare Esq.	—	—	300l. for ditto	—	75
To John Wigglesworth Esq.	—	—	300l. for ditto	—	75
To Charles Harris Esq.	—	—	200l. for ditto	—	50
To Sir W. Musgrave Bart. one of the commissioners for auditing the public accounts, on ditto	—	—	1,000l. for ditto	—	250
To John Thomas Batt Esq.	—	—	1,000l. for ditto	—	250
To William Chamberlayne Esq.	—	—	500l. for ditto	—	125
To Sir John Dick Bart.	—	—	500l. for ditto	—	125
To John Martin Leake Esq.	—	—	1,000l. for ditto	—	250
To Lady Dorchester	—	—	3,000l. for ditto	—	750
To John Penn Esq. of Stoke Pogis	—	—	1000l. for ditto	—	250
To John Penn Esq. of Dover Street	—	—	—	—	1,500
For clerks contingencies in the office for auditing public accounts	—	—	—	—	6,900
To Sir George Yonge, master of His Majesty's mint in England	—	—	—	—	350
To George Atwood Esq. inspector of tontine certificates to defray the expenses attending the execution of an act 30 Geo. III. for converting certain annuities, with benefit of survivorship, into annuities for an absolute term of years	—	—	—	—	3,000
To John Reeves Esq. receiver of the seven Public Offices established pursuant to an act 32 Geo. III. intitled, "An act for the more effectual administration of the office of a Justice of the Peace in such parts of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, as lie in and near the metropolis, and for the more effectual prevention of felonies;" to enable him to discharge the salaries to Justices, clerks, and incidental expences attendant on the said offices	—	—	—	—	1,867
To the Usher of the Exchequer, for necessaries for the Quarter ended 5th July 1794	—	—	655 9 2	—	7
To ditto	—	—	10th October 1794	611 18 2½	4½
To the right honourable Henry Addington, Speaker of the House of Commons, to complete the sum of 1,500l. for the quarter ended 25th March 1795, on 6,000l. per annum, the sum of 400l. having been received by fees, and the sum of 414l. 18s. 6d. being payable at the Exchequer, on the allowance of 5l. a	—	—	—	—	—



day out of the civil list, exclusive of fees	—	685	11	6
To the clerks in the office of the Clerk of the Pells, for their service in the Execution of the acts 29th and 30th Geo. III. for granting annuities on lives, with benefit of survivorship, for six months, due 5th of April 1795	—	440		
Total charge on the consolidated fund, for the quarter ended 5th April 1795	—	2,661,705	18	1½
Surplus of ditto	—	515,369	6	8½
		£. 3,177,075	4	10

MEMORANDUM.—The above sum of 515,369l. 6s. 8½d. is to be applied to the following purposes; viz.

To the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt	—	250,000
In part of 2,697,000l. granted for the service of the year 1794, out of the consolidated fund	265,369	6 8½
	£. 515,369	6 8½

An ACCOUNT of the Income of the CONSOLIDATED  
FUND, in the Quarter ending 5th July 1795.

	£.	s.	d.
Consolidated Duties of Customs	387,732	9	8
Ditto — Excise	2,072,349	17	0½
Ditto — Stamps	270,343	0	0
Ditto — Salt	97,644	3	5
Ditto — Letter Money	102,000	0	0
Seizures, since 25th October 1760	8,393	9	10½
Profers — ditto	472	10	0
Alienation Duty — ditto	1,924	8	8
Compositions — ditto	—	6	8
Deduction of 6d. per Lib. on Pensions, since 24th June 1721	7,000	0	0
Ditto — on Salaries and Pensions, since 5th April 1758	5,698	14	4
Duty on Houses and Windows, since 10th October 1766	113,166	3	2½
Inhabited Houses, since 5th July 1779	45,157	6	3½
Duty on Hawkers and Pedlars, since 23d June 1710	1,159	18	10
Ditto Hackney Coaches and Chairs, since 1st August 1711	5,500	0	0
Ditto Male Servants, since 5th July 1785	34,235	6	4
Ditto Horses, since 29th September 1784	44,390	3	1½
Ditto Four Wheel Carriages, since 5th July 1785	55,723	0	6½
Ditto two wheel carriages, ditto	16,527	17	1
Ditto British spirits, since 5th January 1791	43,322	0	0
Ditto Foreign spirits, since ditto	10,849	0	0
Reserved out of bills and receipts, since 1st August 1791	32,150	0	0
Duty on British spirits, since 21st February 1794	43,291	0	0
Ditto Foreign ditto, since ditto	12,062	0	0
Ditto Attornies articles, since 5th February 1794	4,218	0	0
Ditto Bricks and tiles, (excise), since 28th March 1794	829	0	0
Ditto on ditto (customs), since ditto	10	6	0
Ditto on slates and stones, since 9th May 1794	2,467	10	1½
Ditto on paper, (excise), since 5th April 1794	18,750	0	0
Surplus of ditto	6,217	0	0
Duty on paper, (customs), since ditto	725	3	9
Ditto on glass since ditto	11,170	0	0
Ditto on distillers licences, since ditto	9,000	0	0
Surplus of ditto	30,000	0	0
Duty on British spirits, since 23d February 1795	35,406	0	0
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	12,551	0	0
Ditto on coffee and cocoa, since 16th March 1795	5,219	0	0
Ditto on tea, ditto	28,885	0	0
Ditto on fruit, silk, &c. since 5th April 1795	84	11	5
Ditto on hair powder certificates, since 5th May 1795	75,269	0	0
Ditto on sweets, since 23d February 1795	1,462	0	0
Ditto on wines, since ditto	221,808	0	0

	£.	s.	d.	
Money paid by Messrs, Fludyer, and Co. on account of cloathing sold for Government —	12,706	0	6	
Ditto paid by Charles Goddard, Esq. Agent for Upper Canada —	2,553	16	0	
Ditto paid by William Bradshaw Clin- ton, on account of an annuity granted anno 1746 —	30	0	0	
Imprest money, repaid by Abraham D'Aubant, late chief engineer in North America —	297	18	11½	
				15,587 15 5½

	£.	s.	d.
Arrears of the duty on female fer- vants —	5	15	3
Ditto Waggon —	11	6	0
Ditto Carts —	6	7	0
Ditto 49th 4s. Aid, anno 1785	25	1	9½
Ditto 53d ditto 1789	11	7	1
Ditto 54th ditto 1790	17	16	7
Ditto 55th ditto 1791	1,577	4	4
Ditto 56th ditto 1792	2,500	0	0

4,154 18 9

Money brought to this account, being the sum re-  
served in the Exchequer, on the 5th day of April  
1795, for the use of the public, in respect of the  
annuities for the nominees appointed by the Lords  
of the Treasury, pursuant to an act 30 Geo. III.  
Regis

12,230 16 4½

£. 3,907,136 16 3½

Exchequer,  
the 15th day of April 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

# An Account of the charges upon the Consolidated Fund; in the quarter ending 5th July 1795.

## EXCHEQUER.

Annuities 2-7ths excise, for two and three lives, for three months, due 5th July 1795	—	—	—	£.	s.	d.
£.3700 per week, with the salaries to the officers of the receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer for three months, due ditto	—	—	—	2,048	18	0
Anno 1706	with ditto	—	—	7,957	11	8
1707	with ditto	—	—	6,181	2	10½
Per 1st act anno 1708, with ditto	—	—	—	2,038	0	6½
2d act anno 1708, with ditto	—	—	—	1,229	13	1½
Annuities on lives anno 1745	—	—	—	2,649	6	3½
1746	—	—	—	6,159	2	6
1757	—	—	—	11,233	5	0
1778	—	—	—	12,283	12	6
1779	—	—	—	1,384	16	6
	—	—	—	2,587	9	3½

## SOUTH SEA COMPANY.

Annuity and management on 24,065,084l. 13s. 11½d. their present capital, for three months, due 5th July 1795	183,993	13	5½
Annuity and management on 1,919,600l. for half a year, due ditto, after abating 135l. 5s. 7½d. for the half of 270l. 11s. 3d. being after the rate of 562l. 10s. per million, on the principal sum of 481,000l. purchased by the commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt before 5th January 1795	—	—	—
	29,198	12	1½

## BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annuity and management on 19,796,519l. 2s. 5d. for half a year, due 5th July 1795	—	—	—
	£.	s.	d.
	499,367	3	10½

For answering and paying all and every the annuities as stated by the act 35 Geo. III. after the rate of 5 per cent. per annum on the principal sum of 1,609,897*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* being the amount of annuities to which the proprietors of navy bills, &c. were entitled, who delivered up their bills to be cancelled, on or before the 1st of May, 1795, for the same time ————

40,247 8 11  
361 4 6½

For charges of management of the said annuities for the same time ————

40,609 13 3½

539,976 17 4

Annuity at 3*l.* per cent. per annum on the sum of 113,649,690*l.* 5*s.* 1½*d.* for six months, due 5th July 1795 ————

1,704,745 8 10½

Management on ditto for the same time, after abating the sum of 1,547*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* for the half of 3,094*l.* 13*s.* being after the rate of 450*l.* per million on the principal sum of 6,877,000*l.* purchased by the commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt before 5th January 1795 ————

24,023 17 1½

Annuity on 11,000,000*l.* at 3*l.* per cent. per annum for six months, due 5th July 1795, added to the above capital ————

165,000 0 0

1,728,769 6 0

Management on ditto after the rate of 4.950*l.* per annum for one year and an half, due ditto ————

7,425 0 0

172,425 0 0

Annuity for six months, due 5th July 1795, to the contributors, who, on or before the 2d July 1795 completed the whole of their payments on 13,744,500*l.* part of 18,000,000*l.* granted and directed by act 35 Geo. III. to be added to the above capital ————

206,167 10 0

2,107,361 16 0

Annuities granted by the acts of the 4th and 5th of King William and Queen Mary, and charged upon the 9*d.* per barrel excise (commonly called 14 per cent.)

which ceased on 5th February 1792, and are to be placed to the account of the commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt, for three months, due 5th July 1795

32,128 15 7½

Annuities granted by the acts of the 5th and 6th of the same reign for 96 years, commonly called tonnage, which ceased on the said 5th February 1792, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

1,591 8 0

13,720 3 7½

On the capital stock of 6,250,000l. 3l. per cent. annuities, created in respect of 4,500,000l. borrowed by act 33 Geo. III. for three months, due 5th July 1795, after the rate of 1 per cent. per annum, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

15,625 0 0

On the capital stock of 11,000,000l. 3l. per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. for the same time, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

27,500 0 0

On the capital stock of 2,750,000l. 4l. per cent. annuities, created by the above act for the same time, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

6,875 0 0

On the capital stock of 9,680l. per annum, being 1l. per cent. on the future actual value of the annuity of 11s. 5d. per cent. on the aforementioned 11,000,000l. granted for 66 years and three months, by the last mentioned act, at the end of 45 years, reckoning the same at the rate of 3l. per cent. per annum for the same time, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

2,420 0 0

On the capital stock of 1,926,525l. 12s. 5d. 5l. per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. in lieu of navy and victualling bills delivered up to be cancelled at the rate of 1l. per cent. per annum for the same time, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

4,816 6 3

On the capital stock of 6,000,000l. 4l. per cent annuities, created by act 35 Geo. III. for the same time and at the same rate, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

15,000 0 0

On the capital stock of 18,000,000l. 3l. per cent. annuities, created by the above act for the same time and at the same rate, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

45,000 0 0

On the sum of 12,835l. per annum, being 1l. per cent. per ann. on the future annual value of the annuity of 9s. 6d. per cent. on the aforementioned 18,000,000l. granted for 65 years and three months, by the said act 35 Geo. III. at the end of 45 years, reckoning the same at the rate of 3l. per cent. per annum for the same time and the same rate, to be placed to the account of the said commissioners

3,208 15 0

Annuity and management on 1,000,000l. at 3l. per cent. per annum for six months, due 5th July 1795	120,445	1	3
Bank of England on their capital of 3,200,000l. at 3l. per cent. per annum for three months, due 12th May 1795	15,225	0	0
Ditto — on 500,000l. at 3l. per cent. per annum for three months, due 5th July 1795	25,000	0	0
Ditto — on 1,250,000l. at ditto for ditto	3,750	0	0
Ditto — on 1,750,000l. at ditto for ditto	9,375	0	0
Ditto — on 1,750,000l. at ditto for ditto	13,125	0	0
Ditto — on 986,800l. at ditto for ditto	7,401	0	0
Ditto — on 4,000,000l. at ditto for ditto	30,474	10	10
To the Judges of England and Wales on their several additional allowances, for three months, due 5th July 1795	3,262	10	0
To Ann Cais, late office keeper in the office for managing the former duties on wine licences for ditto, due ditto	5	0	0
To Edward Roberts, Esq. first clerk to the clerk of the pells, on 650l. per annum, formerly paid to the auditor of the receipt of the Exchequer, for salaries to the officers of the Exchequer bill office, and now payable to him per act 23 Geo. III.	162	10	0
For the support of His Majesty's household	224,500	0	0
To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, for three quarters of a year, due 5th July 1795, on his annuity of 65,000l. per act 35 Geo. III.	48,750	0	0
To His Royal Highness the Duke of York, on his annuity of 14,000l. for three months, due 5th July 1795	3,500	0	0
To her Royal Highness the Duchess of York, on her annuity of 4,000l. for ditto	1,000	0	0
To his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, on ditto 12,000l. for ditto	3,000	0	0
To his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester on ditto 9,000l. for ditto	2,250	0	0





Lady Dorchester, on her annuity of 1,000*l.* for three months, due 5th July 1795

350 0 0

Total charge on the consolidated fund for the quarter, ended 5th July 1795

3,466,840 8 0

Surplus of ditto

440,296 8 3½

3,997,136 16 3½

MEMORANDUM.—The above sum of 440,296*l.* 8*s.* 3½*d.* is to be applied to the following purposes, viz.

To the commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt 250,000 0 0  
In part of 2,895,000*l.* granted out of the consolidated fund, for the service  
of the year 1795

190,296 8 3½

440,296 8 3½

An Account of the Income of the Consolidated Fund, for the  
quarter ending 10th October 1795.

Consolidated duties of customs	—	1,040,215	12	9
Ditto excise	—	1,806,149	15	11½
Ditto stamps	—	365,411	12	7
Ditto salt	—	110,488	17	5½
Ditto letter money	—	128,000		
Seizures since 25th October 1760	—	10,500	14	5½
Profers ditto	—	105	6	8
Compositions ditto	—		3	4
Rent of alum mines ditto	—	480		
Duty on male servants, since 5th July 1785	—	12,214	11	7½
Deduction of 6d. per lib. on pensions, since 24th June 1721	—	15,000		
Ditto 1s. on salaries and pensions, since 5th April 1758	—	7,000		
Duty on houses and windows, since 10th October 1766	—	42,675	4	8½
Ditto on inhabited houses, since 5th July 1779	—	27,103	5	
Ditto on hawkers and pedlars, since 23d July 1710	—	1,040		
Ditto hackney coaches and chairs, since 1st August 1711	—	8,800		
Ditto on horses, since 29th September 1784	—	12,765	9	0½
Ditto on four-wheel carriages, since 5th July 1785	—	25,556	4	5½
Ditto on two-wheel carriages ditto	—	4,043	8	7½
Ditto on British spirits, since 5th January 1791	—	25,754		
Ditto on foreign spirits, since ditto	—	15,430		
Reserved out of bills and receipts, since 1st August 1791	—	32,150		
Duty on British spirits, since 21st February 1794	—	26,725		
Ditto foreign ditto, since ditto	—	18,049		
Ditto on attornies articles, since 5th February 1794	—	4,357	13	6
Ditto on bricks and tiles (excise), since 28th March 1794	—	18,751		
Ditto (customs), since ditto	—	200		
Ditto on slates, stones, &c. since 9th May 1794	—	3,753	19	1½
Ditto on paper (excise), since 5th April 1794	—	18,750		
Surplus of ditto	—	22,022		
Duty on paper (customs), since ditto	—	2,200		
Ditto on glass, since ditto	—	8,146		
Ditto on distillers licences, since ditto	—	9,000		
Surplus of ditto	—	8,000		
Duty on British spirits, since 23d February 1795	—	27,864		
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	—	15,415		
Ditto on coffee and cocoa, since 16th March 1795	—	3,593		
Ditto on tea ditto	—	52,859		
Ditto on fruit, silk, &c.	—	20,101	15	8
Ditto on hair powder certificates, since 5th May 1795	—	111,816	15	0

Ditto on sweets,	since ditto	—	2,954
Ditto on wines,	since ditto	—	356,736
Ditto on ship policies	—	—	16,059 19
Ditto on additional receipts	—	—	4,204
Ditto on additional stamps	—	—	8,713 15 8
Ditto on coals, since 5th July 1795	—	—	71 14 2

		£.	s.	d.
Arrears of the duty on female servants		94	0	0½
Ditto — waggons		81	9	3½
Ditto — carts	—	73	17	11½
Ditto — men servants,				
anno 1777	—	9	9	
Ditto 53d 4s. aid, anno 1789		679	18	5
Ditto 55th 4s. aid, anno 1791		680	17	2½
Ditto 56th 4s. aid, anno 1792		4,646	5	0½
				6,265 16 11½
				£. 4,457,583 15 9½

Exchequer,  
the 15th day of April 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of the Charges upon the Consolidated Fund, for the quarter ending 10th October 1795.

EXCHEQUER.

Annunities 2-7ths excise for two and three lives, for three months, due 10th October 1795	—	2,048	18	0
3-700l. per week excise, with the salaries to the officers of His Majesty's Exchequer, for three months, due 10th October 1795	—	7,957	11	8
Anno 1706 with ditto	—	6,181	2	11
1707 — with ditto	—	2,038	0	6
per 1st account anno 1708, with ditto	—	1,229	13	11
2d account anno 1708, with ditto	—	2,649	6	3
Annunities on lives with benefit of survivorship, for six months	—	270		
in classes, per act 29 Geo. III.	—	21,431	0	6

SOUTH SEA COMPANY.

Annuity and management on 24,065,084l. 13s. 11d. their present capital, for three months, due 10th October 1795 183,993 13 5½

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annuity and management on 32,750,000l. four per cent. annuities for six months, due 10th October 1795	—	£.	s.	d.
Annuity and management on 2,750,000l. four per cent annuities, granted by an act 34 Geo. III. for six months, due ditto	—	662,368	15	0
To such of the contributors for raising 18,000,000l. for the service of the year 1795 as completed their whole payments on 2,012,208l. 6s. 8d on or before the 2d April 1795, for six months, due 10th October 1795, which annuities are by the act of 35 Geo. III. direct-	—	57,475		

ed to be consolidated with the above four per cent. annuities  
 To such of the contributors who did not complete their whole  
 payments on 3,987,791l. 13s. 4d. on or before the laid  
 2d April 1795, for one year, to the laid 10th October  
 1795, on their completing the same —

Annuities for thirty and twenty-nine years, by acts 18 and 19  
 Geo. III. — — for six months, due ditto  
 Management on ditto — — for ditto due ditto  
 Annuities for 18½ years, by act 29 Geo. III. for ditto due ditto  
 Management on ditto — — for ditto due ditto

Annuities for long terms, consolidated by several acts of Par-  
 liament, for six months, due ditto  
 Management on ditto for ditto due ditto

Annuities granted by act 34 Geo. III. for sixty-six years and  
 one quarter, for ditto due ditto  
 Management on ditto for two years, ended 10th October 1795

To such of the contributors for raising 18,000,000l. as com-  
 pleted their whole payments on or before the 2d April 1795,  
 for six months, due to October 1795, on annuities granted  
 by an act 35 Geo. III. for sixty-five years and one quarter,  
 and which were directed by the said act to be added to, and  
 made one joint stock with the above-mentioned annuities

40,244 3 4

159,517 13 4

199,755 16 8

919,599 11 8

202,165 12 2½

2774 7 3½

204,440 1 5½

7,000 16 3

78 15 2

7,079 11 5

211,519 12 10½

352,370 2 6

3,964 3 3½

356,334 5 9½

31,395 16 8

1,412 16 3

32,808 12 11

12,208 18 5

Annuity of one per centum, granted by one other act of the same session of Parliament, to the said contributors who completed their whole payment on or before the said 2d April 1795, for one year, due 10th October 1795 —

To such of the contributors for raising 18,000,000l. as did not complete their whole payments on the said 2d April 1795, for one year, due 10th October 1795, on their completing the same —

2,872 13 9

58,209 9 5

73,291 1 7

462,434 0 3½

623,101 2 1½

8,455 10 1

631,556 12 2½

Annuity on 41,540,073l. 16s. 4d. three per cent reduced annuities, for six months, due 10th of October 1795 —

Management on ditto, after abating the sum of 891l. 0s. 2½d. being after the rate of 450l. per million on the principal sum of 3,960,050l. purchased by the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt, before 5th April 1795 —

On the capital stock of 6,250,000l. three per cent. annuities, created in respect of 4,500,000l. borrowed pursuant to an act 33 Geo. III. for three months, due 10th October 1795, after the rate of 1l. per cent. per annum and is to be placed to the account of the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt —

On the capital stock of 11,000,000l. three per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto —

On the capital stock of 2,750,000l. four per cent. annuities, created by the above act, for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —

On the sum of 9,680l. per annum, being 1l. per cent. per annum on the future actual value of the annuity of 11s. 5d. per cent. on the afore-mentioned 11,000,000l. granted for fifty-six years and three months by the last-mentioned act, at the end of forty-five years, reckoning the same at the rate of 3l. per cent. per annum for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto —

15,625

27,500

6,875

2,420

On the capital stock of 1,026,525*l.* 12*s.* 5*d.* five per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. in lieu of navy and victualling bills delivered up to be cancelled, for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —  
 On the capital stock of 18,000,000*l.* three per cent annuities, created by an act 35 Geo. III. for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —  
 On the capital stock of 6,000,000*l.* four per cent annuities, created by the last-mentioned act, for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —  
 On the sum of 12,835*l.* per annum, being one per cent. per annum on the future actual value of the annuity of 9*s.* 6*d.* per cent on the aforementioned 18,000,000*l.* granted for sixty-five years and three months by the said act 35 Geo. III. at the end of forty-five years, reckoning the same at the rate of three per cent. per annum for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —  
 On the capital stock of 1,609,897*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* five per cent. annuities, created by an act 35 Geo. III. in lieu of navy and victualling bills delivered up to be cancelled for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —

3,208 15 0

— 4,024 14 10½

124,469 16 1½

Annuities granted by the acts of the 4th and 5th of King William and Queen Mary, and charged upon the 9*d.* per barrel (excise) commonly called 14 per cents. which ceased on the 5th February 1792, for three months, due to October 1795, to be placed to the account of ditto —

12,128 15 7½

Annuities granted by the acts of the 5th and 6th of the same reign, commonly called tonnage, which ceased on the said 5th February 1792, to be placed to the account of ditto —

1,591 8 0

13,720 3 7½

Annuities granted anno 1777 for ten years, amounting to the sum of 25,000*l.* per annum, which ceased on the 5th April 1787, for six months, due 10th October 1795, to be placed to the account of ditto —

12,500

Bank of England on their capital of 3,200,000*l.* at three per cent. per annum, for three months, due 12th August 1795 —

25,000

Ditto	on 4,000,000 <i>l.</i> purchased of the South Sea Company, for three months, due 10th October 1795	—	—	—	30,474 10 10½
Ditto	on 500,000 <i>l.</i> at three per cent. per annum, for ditto	—	—	due ditto	3,750
Ditto	on 1,250,000 <i>l.</i> at ditto, for ditto	—	—	due ditto	9,375
Ditto	on 1,750,000 <i>l.</i> at ditto, for ditto	—	—	due ditto	13,125
Ditto	on 986,800 <i>l.</i> at ditto, for ditto	—	—	due ditto	7,401
To the Judges of England and Wales on their several additional allowances for three months, due 10th of October 1795	—	—	—	—	3,262 10 0
To Ann Cals, late office keeper in the office for managing the former duties on wine licences, for ditto, due ditto	—	—	—	—	5
To Edward Roberts, Esq. first clerk to the Clerk of the Pells, on the allowance of 6 <i>g</i> ol. per annum, formerly paid to the auditor of the receipt of the Exchequer for salaries to the officers of the Exchequer Bill-office, now payable to him per act 23 Geo.	—	—	—	—	162 10 0
For the support of His Majesty's household	—	—	—	—	224,500
To His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, on his annuity of 65,000 <i>l.</i>	—	—	—	—	16,250
To His Royal Highness the Duke of York, on ditto	—	—	—	—	3500
To Her Royal Highness the Dutchess of York, on ditto	—	—	—	—	1,000
To His Royal Highness the Dutchess of Clarence, on ditto	—	—	—	—	3,000
To His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, on ditto	—	—	—	—	2,250
To ditto	—	—	—	—	2,000
To the representatives of Arthur Onslow, Esq. on ditto	—	—	—	—	750
To the Earl of Chatham on ditto	—	—	—	—	1,000
To Lord Rodney on ditto	—	—	—	—	500
To Lord Heathfield on ditto	—	—	—	—	375
To the Earl of Bute, one of the auditors of the imprest, on ditto, 7,000 <i>l.</i>	—	—	—	—	1,750
To Philip Deane Esq. on ditto, 300 <i>l.</i>	—	—	—	—	75
To John Wigglesworth Esq. on ditto, 300 <i>l.</i>	—	—	—	—	75
To Charles Harris Esq. on ditto, 200 <i>l.</i>	—	—	—	—	50



To Sir William Musgrave, Bart. one of the commissioners for auditing the public accounts, on his annuity of 1,000l. for ditto, due ditto	—	—	—	250
To John Thomas Batt, Esq.	—	—	on ditto	1,000l. for ditto, due ditto
To William Chamberlayne, Esq.	—	—	on ditto	1,000l. for ditto, due ditto
To Sir John Dick, Bart.	—	—	on ditto	500l. for ditto, due ditto
To John Martin Leake, Esq.	—	—	on ditto	500l. for ditto, due ditto
To Lady Dorchester	—	—	on ditto	1,000l. for ditto, due ditto
To John Penn, Esq. at Stoke Pogis	—	—	on ditto	3,000l. for ditto, due ditto
To Richard Penn, Esq.	—	—	on ditto	1,000l. for ditto, due ditto
For clerks contingencies in the office for auditing the public accounts	—	—	—	1,500 for ditto, due ditto
To Sir George Yonge, master of His Majesty's mint	—	—	—	3,450 for ditto, due ditto
To the clerks in the office of the Clerk of the Pells, for their service in the execution of the acts 29 and 30 Geo. III. for granting annuities on lives, with benefit of survivorship, for six months, due ditto	—	—	—	440
To the Sheriffs of England and Wales, for their charge of taking forth their letters patent for their respective offices, and for passing their accounts for one year, due ditto	—	—	—	4,000
To John Reeves, Esq. receiver of the seven public offices established by an act 32 Geo. III. intituled, "An act for the more effectual administration of the office of a Justice of the Peace in such parts of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, as lie in and near the metropolis, and for the more effectual prevention of felonies;" to enable him to discharge the salaries due to the Justices, clerks, and incidental expenses attendant on the said offices	—	—	—	2,800
To George Atwood, Esq. inspector of tontine certificates to defray the expenses attending the execution of an act 30 Geo. III. for converting certain annuities, with benefit of survivorship, into annuities for an absolute term of years	—	—	—	350
To the Clerk of the Hanaper in the Court of Chancery, towards defraying the charges for salaries and allowances in that office	—	—	—	2,178 7 4
To Henry Addington Esq. Speaker of the House of Commons, to complete 1,500l. for the quarter ended 29th September 1795, on 6,000l. per annum	—	—	—	519 3 0

To the Usher of the Exchequer, for necessaries for the quarter ended 5th January 1795 664 19 8  
 Ditto 5th April 1795 708 4 8½

	1,373	4	4½
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	2,972,090	8	10½
	1,485,493	6	11
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	£. 4,457,583	15	9½
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Total charge on the consolidated fund, for the quarter ended 10th October 1795 —  
 Surplus of ditto —

MEMORANDUM.—The above sum of 1,495,493l. 6s. 11d. is to be applied to the following purposes; viz.

To the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt	250,000
In part of 2,895,000l. granted out of the consolidated fund, for the service of the year 1795	1,235,493 6 11
	<hr/>
	£. 1,485,493 6 11
	<hr/>

An ACCOUNT of the Income of the Consolidated Fund, for  
the quarter ending on the 5th January 1795.

	£.	s.	d.
Consolidated duties of customs	1,033,776	8	6
Ditto — excise	1,533,022	5	6½
Ditto — stamps	260,505	0	0
Ditto — on salt	96,644	15	5½
Ditto — letter money	78,000	0	0
Seizures, since 25th October 1760	2,000	0	0
Profers, since ditto	33	14	5
Rent of allum mines, since ditto	—	—	—
Compositions, since ditto	—	6	8
Deduction of 6d. per lib. on pensions, &c. since 24th June 1721	16,000	0	0
Ditto — on salaries and pensions, since 5th April 1758	12,519	12	0½
Duty on houses and windows, since 10th October 1766	98,165	7	0
Inhabited houses, since 5th July 1779	35,146	2	8½
Duty on hawkers and pedlars, since 23d June 1710	1,000	0	0
Ditto on hackney coaches and chairs, since 1st August 1711	4,000	0	0
Ditto on male servants, since 5th July 1785	28,249	18	1½
Ditto on horses, since 29th September 1784	30,778	8	10
Ditto on four-wheeled carriages, since 5th July 1785	40,136	15	11½
Ditto on two-wheeled carriages, ditto	13,025	7	5
Licences for selling lottery tickets 1794	1,748	2	8
Duty on British spirits, since 5th January 1791	1,064	0	0
Ditto on foreign spirits, since ditto	29,637	0	0
Reserved out of bills of exchange and receipts, since 1st August 1791	32,150	0	0
Duty on British spirits, since 21st February 1794	1,000	0	0
Foreign ditto, since ditto	28,494	0	0
Attornies articles, since 5th February 1794	2,831	0	0
Bricks and tiles, (excise), since 28th March 1794	26,044	0	0
Ditto (customs), since ditto	50	0	0
Slates, stones, &c. since 9th May 1794	2,081	12	4
Paper, (excise), since 5th April 1794	18,750	0	0
Surplus of ditto	21,210	0	0
Duty on paper, (customs), since ditto	100	2	11
Glass, since 17th April 1794	9,577	0	0
Distillers licences, since ditto	9,000	0	0
Surplus of ditto	22,000	0	0
Duty on British spirits, since 23d February 1795	3,421	0	0
Foreign ditto, since ditto	28,307	0	0
Cocoa and coffee, since 16th March 1795	7,289	0	0
Tea ditto	56,912	0	0
Fruit, silk, &c. since 5th April 1795	42,977	17	2
Coals, since 5th July 1795	85	1	6
Hair powder certificates, since 5th May 1795	6,167	0	0

Duty on Wines, since 23d February 1795	—	144,995	0	0
Sweets, since ditto	—	1,263	0	0
Ships policies, since 5th July 1795	—	17,802	0	0
Receipts, since ditto	—	1,129	0	0
Stamps, since ditto	—	7,956	0	0
Compositions paid by the Bank of England, in lieu of stamp duties on notes and bills issued by them		6,000	0	0
Arrears of the 51st 4s. aid, anno 1791	—	24	1	6½
Imprest money, repaid by Joseph Smith, Esq.		1,777	10	4½
Money repaid by William Henry Milburne, Esq. Sheriff	—		2	3 0
Money brought to this account, being the sum reserved in the Exchequer on the 10th October 1795, for the use of the public in respect to the annuities for the nominees appointed by the Lords of the Treasury, pursuant to an act 30 Geo. III.	—	12,232	13	7½
		<u>£.3,830,081</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>9½</u>

Exchequer,  
the 15th day of April 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of the Income of the Consolidated Fund, for the quarter ending the 5th January 1796.

EXCHEQUER.

Annuities 2-7ths excise, for two and three lives	for three months, due 5th January 1796	—	£.	s.	d.
£. 3700 per week, with salaries of the officers			2,048	18	0
of the receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer					
Anno 1706 with ditto	for ditto	—	7,957	11	8
1707 with ditto	for ditto	—	6,181	2	10½
Per 1st a <sup>c</sup> t, 1708, with ditto	for ditto	—	2,038	0	6½
2d a <sup>c</sup> t, 1708, with ditto	for ditto	—	1,229	13	1½
on lives, anno 1745	for ditto	—	2,649	6	3½
1746	for six months	—	6,159	2	0
1757	for ditto	—	11,233	5	0
1778	for ditto	—	12,283	12	6
1779	for ditto	—	1,384	16	6
	for ditto	—	2,587	9	3½

SOUTH SEA COMPANY.

Annuity and management on 24,065,084l. 13s. 11½d. their present capital, for three months, due 5th January 1796	183,993	13	5½
on 1,919,600l. for half a year, due ditto, after abating 135l. 5s. 7½d.			
for the half of 270l. 11s. 3d. being after the rate of 562l. 10s. per million, on the principal sum of 481,000l. purchased by the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt, before 5th July 1795	29,198	12	1½
For a deduction made in the warrant for the half year, due 5th July 1795, for 3,000l. more than had been purchased by the commissioners, in consequence of an error in the account transmitted from their office	29,199	9	0

## BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annuity and management on 21,406,416l. 19s. 4d. at 5l. per cent. per ann. for half a year, due 5th January 1796 539,976 17 4  
 ——— on 1,000,000l. at 3l. per cent. per ann. for ditto, due ditto 15,225 0 0

Annuity at 3l. per cent. per ann. on the principal sum of 113,649,696l. 5s. 1½d. of ditto, due ditto 1,704,745 8 10½

For satisfying and paying the charges of management on the said annuity for ditto, after abating 1,819l. 2s. 6d. being the half of 3,638l. 5s. at the rate of 450l. per million on 8,085,000l. purchased by the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt, before 5th July 1795 23,752 1 1½

1,728,497 10 0

Annuity at 3l. per cent. on 11,000,000l. added to the above capital by act 34 Geo.

III. for six months, to 5th January 1776 165,000 0 0

Charges of management on the said annuity for the same time 2,475 0 0

167,475 0 0

For answering and paying half a year's annuity, due ditto, to the contributors, who, on or before 2d July 1795, completed the whole of their payments on 13,744,500l. part of 18,000,000l. granted by act 35 Geo. III. to be added to the above capital 206,167 10 0

For answering and paying one year's annuity to 5th January 1796, to the contributors who did not, on or before 2d July 1795, complete their whole payments on 4,255,500l. other part of said 18,000,000l. on their completing the same 127,665 0 0

333,832 10 0

For answering and paying half a year's annuity at 3l. per cent. due 5th January 1796, to the contributors, who, on or before 2d January 1796, completed their whole payments on 2,625,800l. part of 18,000,000l. granted and directed by act 26 Geo. III. to be added to the above capital ———

39,387 0 0

2,269,192 0 0

in their capital of 3,200,000l. at 3l. per cent. per ann. for three months, due 13th November 1795	—	—	—	—	35,000	0	0
Ditto 500,000l. at ditto	—	for ditto	due 5th January 1796	—	3,750	0	0
Ditto 1,250,000l. at ditto	—	for ditto	due ditto	—	9,375	0	0
Ditto 1,750,000l. at ditto	—	for ditto	due ditto	—	13,125	0	0
Ditto 986,000l. at ditto	—	for ditto	due ditto	—	7,401	0	0
Ditto 4,000,000l. at ditto, purchased of the South Sea Company for three months, due ditto	—	—	—	—	30,474	10	10½
Annuities granted by acts 4th and 5th of King William and Queen Mary, commonly called 14 per cents, which ceased on 5th February 1792, and are to be placed to the account of the commissioners for reducing the national debt, for three months, due 5th January 1796	—	—	—	12,128	15	7½	
Annuities for 96 years by acts 5th and 6th of the same reign, which ceased at the same time, and are to be placed to the same account	—	—	—	1,591	8	0	
Annuity at 1l. per cent. per ann. on 6,250,000l.—3l. per cent. annuities, created in respect of 4,500l. borrowed by act 33 Geo. III for one quarter, ended 5th January 1796, to be placed to the account of the above commissioners	—	—	—	—	13,720	3	7½
Annuity at 1l. per cent. per ann. on 11,000,000l.—4l. per cent. annuities, created by act 34 Geo. III. for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto	—	—	—	15,625	0	0	
Annuity at 1l. per cent. per ann. on 2,750,000l.—4 per cent. annuities, created by the above act for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto	—	—	—	27,500	0	0	
On the sum of 9,680l. per ann. being 1l. per cent. per ann. on the future actual value of the annuity of 11s. 5d. for the abovementioned 11,000,000l. granted for 66 years and three months, by the said last mentioned act, at the end of 45 years, reckoning the same at the rate of 3l. per cent. per ann. for the same time, on account of ditto	—	—	—	6,875	0	0	
Annuity at 1l. per cent. per ann. on 1,926,521l. 12s. 5d. in 5 per cent. annuities, created by act 34 Geo. III. in lieu of navy and victualling bills delivered up to be cancelled, for the same time, on account of ditto	—	—	—	2,420	0	0	
Annuity at 1l. per cent. per ann. on 18,000,000l.—3l. per cent. annuities, created by act 35 Geo.	—	—	—	4,816	6	3	





To His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, on his annuity of 8,000l.	for ditto	2,000	0	0
To the representatives of Arthur Onslow, Esq. on ditto 3,000l.	for ditto	750	0	0
To the Earl of Chatham, on ditto 4,000l.	for ditto	1,000	0	0
To Lord Rodney, on ditto 2,000l.	for ditto	500	0	0
To Lord Heathfield, on ditto 1,500l.	for ditto	375	0	0
To the Earl of Bute, late one of the Auditors of the Imprest on 7,000l. per ann.	for ditto	1,750	0	0
To Philip Deare, Esq.	for ditto	75	0	0
To John Wigglesworth, Esq.	for ditto	75	0	0
To Charles Harris, Esq.	for ditto	50	0	0
To Sir W. Mufgrave, Bart. one of the commissioners for auditing the public accounts	for ditto	250	0	0
To John Thomas Batt, Esq. another	for ditto	250	0	0
To William Chamberlayne, Esq. another	for ditto	250	0	0
To Sir John Dick, Bart. another	for ditto	125	0	0
To John Martin Leake, Esq. another	for ditto	125	0	0
To Lady Dorchester, on her annuity of 1,000l. per ann.	for ditto	250	0	0
To John Penn, Esq. of Stoke Pogis, on his annuity of 3,000l.	for ditto	750	0	0
To Richard Penn, Esq. 1,000l.	for ditto	250	0	0
For clerks contingencies in the office for auditing the public accounts	—	1,500	0	0
To Sir George Yonge, Bart. master of His Majesty's Mint in England	—	3,450	0	0
To Robert Hepburn, Esq. ditto in Scotland	—	1,200	0	0
To the right honourable Henry Addington, Speaker of the House of Commons, the sum of 1,099l. 9s. which, together with 400l. 11s. being the net produce of the allowance of 5l. a day, payable out of His Majesty's civil list revenues, will complete the sum of 1,500l. due for the quarter ended 25th December 1795				
To John Reeves, Esq. receiver of the seven Public Offices established pursuant to	—	1,099	9	0

an act 32 Geo. III. for the more effectual administration of the office of Justice of the Peace, to enable him to discharge the incidental expenses of the said offices

2,800 0 0

To Thomas Marfham, Esq. Secretary to the commissioners for issuing Exchequer bills to a limited amount, for the purposes and in the manner mentioned in an act

35 Geo. III. for defraying the necessary charges attending the execution of the said act

1,000 0 0

Total charge on the consolidated fund, for the quarter ended 5th January 1796  
Surplus of ditto, to be applied by the commissioners appointed by Parliament for reducing the national debt, in part of 250,000*l.* for the quarter ended the 5th day of January 1796

3,594,908 2 3

235,173 5 6½

£3,380,081 7 9½

An Account of the Income of the Consolidated Fund, for the quarter ending 5th April 1796.

	£.	s.	d.
Consolidated duties of customs	753,369	0	5½
Ditto excise	1,352,976	19	7½
Ditto stamps	288,726		
Ditto salt	116,798	3	10½
Ditto letter money	134,000		
Seizures, since 25th October 1760	1,000		
Profers, since ditto	11	1	1
Compositions, since ditto	0	6	8
Deduction of 6d. per lib. on pensions, &c. since 24th June 1721	6,951		
Ditto on salaries and pensions, since 5th April 1758	3,500		
Duty on houses and windows, since 10th October 1766	73,512	6	4½
Ditto on inhabited houses, since 5th July 1779	20,698	1	6
Rent of alum mines, since 25th October 1760	480		
Duty on hawkers and pedlars, since 23d June 1710	800		
Ditto on hackney coaches and chairs, since 1st August 1711	5,500		
Ditto on male servants, since 5th July 1785	13,833	13	4½
Ditto on horses, since 29th September 1784	17,912	14	0½
Ditto on four-wheeled carriages, since 5th July 1785	28,609	17	7
Ditto on two-wheeled ditto, since ditto	5,863	16	0
Ditto on sugar, since 11th April 1791	316	6	5½
Ditto on British spirits, since 5th January 1791	12,239		
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	26,886		
Ditto on bills of exchange and receipts, since 1st August 1791	42,713		
Ditto on game duty, since 1st July 1791	796		
Ditto of 10l. per cent. on assessed taxes, since 5th April 1791	10,198	9	11½
Ditto on British spirits, since 21st February 1794	12,871		
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	28,205		
Ditto on attornies articles, since 5th February 1794	6,201		
Ditto on bricks and tiles (customs), since 28th March 1794	49	17	3
Ditto (excise), since ditto	7,592		
Ditto on slates, stones, &c. since 9th May 1794	1,078	9	8½
Ditto on paper (customs), since 5th April 1794	1,683	13	8
Ditto on ditto (excise), since ditto	18,750		
Surplus of ditto	29,662		
Duty on glass, since 17th April 1795	11,950		
Ditto on British spirits, since 23d February 1795	12,245		
Ditto on foreign ditto, since ditto	28,398		
Ditto on cocoa and coffee, since 16th March 1795	2,141		
Ditto on tea since ditto	48,778		
Ditto on fruit, silk, &c. since 5th April 1795	2,814	8	5

Ditto on coals, since 5th July	—	—	35	9	1½
Ditto on hair powder certificates since 5th May 1795	—	—	3,980		
Ditto on wine, since 23d February 1795	—	—	199,787		
Ditto on sweets, since ditto	—	—	2,922		
Ditto on ship policies, since 5th July 1795	—	—	17,262		
Ditto on receipts, since ditto	—	—	1,547		
Ditto on stamps, since ditto	—	—	10,329		
Ditto on tobacco and snuffs, since 7th December 1795	—	—	40,338		
Ditto on horse dealers licences, since ditto	—	—	240		
Ditto on salt, since 5th January 1796	—	—	8,000		
Arrears of 49th 4s. aid, anno 1785	—	—	49	16	2
Ditto of 55th 4s. aid, anno 1791	—	—	24	1	6½
Ditto of 56th 4s. aid, anno 1792	—	—	3,000		
Ditto of 57th 4s. aid, anno 1793	—	—	10,058	1	2½
			<hr/>		
			£.3,427,683	14	1
			<hr/>		

Exchequer,  
the 15th day of April 1796.

JAMES FISHER.



Annuities for thirty and twenty-nine years and for eighteen years three quarters, by acts 18, 19, and 29 of the same reign, for ditto ————  
 Management on ditto ————

209,166 10 5½  
 2,353 2 5½

211,519 12 10½

Annuity for long terms, consolidated by several acts of Parliament, for ditto ————

383,765 19 2  
 4,317 7 4

Management on ditto ———— for ditto

388,083 6 6

For answering and paying the annuity granted by act 35 Geo.

III. for sixty-five years and a quarter, for ditto ————

42,750 0 0

For paying the annuity granted by an act 36 Geo. III. for sixty-four years and one quarter, to such of the contributors for raising 18,000,000*l.* for the service of the year 1796, as completed their whole payments on 31,555*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* on or before 2d April 1796, for six months, due 5th April 1796

15,777 18 9

58,527 18 9

446,611 5 3

For paying the annuity on 41,540,073*l.* 16*s.* 4*d.* three per cent.

reduced annuities, for six months, due 5th April 1796

623,101 2 1½

Management on ditto, after abating the sum of 932*l.* 17*s.* 5*d.* from the same, being after the rate of 450*l.* per million on the principal sum of 4,146,100*l.* purchased by the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt, before 18th October 1795 ————

8,413 12 11

631,514 15 0½

To such of the contributors towards raising 18,000,000*l.* for the service of the year 1796, as completed their whole payments on 2,074,125*l.* before the 2d April 1796, for six months, due 5th April 1796 ————

31,111 17 6

662,626 12 6½

On the capital stock of 6,250,000 <i>l.</i> three per cent. annuities, created in respect of 4,500,000 <i>l.</i> , borrowed pursuant to an act 33 Geo. III. for three months, due 5th April 1796, at the rate of 1 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum, and is to be placed to the account of the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt —	15,625	0	0
On the capital stock of 11,000,000 <i>l.</i> three per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —	27,500	0	0
On the capital stock of 2,750,000 <i>l.</i> four per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —	6,875	0	0
On the sum of 9,680 <i>l.</i> per annum, being 1 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum on the future actual value of the annuity of 11 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> per cent, on the afore-mentioned, 11,000,000 <i>l.</i> granted for sixty-six years and one quarter by the last-mentioned act, at the end of forty-five years, reckoning the same at the rate of 3 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —	2,420	0	0
On the capital stock of 1,926,525 <i>l.</i> 12 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> five per cent. annuities, created by an act 34 Geo. III. in lieu of navy and victualling bills delivered up to be cancelled, at the same rate, for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto —	4,816	6	3
On the capital stock of 18,000,000 <i>l.</i> three per cent. annuities, created by an act 35 Geo. III. for the same time, at the rate of 1 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum, to be placed to the account of ditto —	45,000	0	0
On the capital stock of 6,000,000 <i>l.</i> four per cent. annuities, created by the last-mentioned act, for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto —	15,000	0	0
On the sum of 12,835 <i>l.</i> per annum, being one per cent. per annum on the future actual value of the annuity of 9 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> per cent, on the afore-mentioned 18,000,000 <i>l.</i> granted for sixty-five years and one quarter by the said act 35 Geo. III. at the end of forty-five years, reckoning the same at the rate of three per cent. per annum for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto —	3,208	15	0
On the capital stock of 1,609,897 <i>l.</i> 17 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i> in five per cent. annuities, created by an act 35 Geo. III. in lieu of navy and victualling bills delivered up to be cancelled at the same rate, for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto —	4,024	14	10½

On the capital stock of 21,600,000*l.* three per cent. annuities, created in respect of 18,000,000*l.* borrowed in pursuance of an act 36 Geo. III. at the same rate, for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto

54,000 0 0

On the capital stock of 4,500,000*l.* three per cent. annuities, created by the last-mentioned acts in respect of the said loan, for the same time, at the same rate, to be placed to the account of ditto

11,250 0 0

On the sum of 8,460*l.* per annum, being one per cent. per annum on the future actual value of the annuity of 6*s.* 6*d.* per annum on the aforeaid 18,000,000*l.* granted for sixty-four years and one quarter, at the end of forty-five years, reckoning the same at three per cent. per annum for the same time, to be placed to the account of ditto

2,115 0 0

191,834 16 1½

Annuities granted anno 1777 for ten years, amounting to the sum of 25,000*l.* per annum, which ceased upon the 5th April 1787, and are to be placed to the account of the said Commissioners, for six months, due 5th April 1796

12,500 0 0

Annuities granted by the acts of the 4th and 5th of King William and Queen Mary, and charged upon the 9*d.* per barrel excise (commonly called 14 per cents.) which ceased on the 5th February 1792, and are to be placed to the account of ditto

12,128 15 7½

Annuities granted by the acts of the 5th and 6th of the same reign, for ninety-six years, commonly called tonnage, which ceased on the said 5th February 1792, and are to be placed to the account of ditto

1,591 8 0

13,720 3 7½

Bank of England on their capital of 3,200,000*l.* at three per cent. per annum, due 12th February 1796

25,000 0 0

Ditto on 4,000,000*l.* purchased of the South Sea Company, for three months, due 5th April 1796

30,474 10 10½

Ditto on 500,000*l.*

for ditto

3,750 0 0

Ditto on 1,250,000*l.*

for ditto

9,375 0 0

Ditto on 1,750,000*l.*

for ditto

13,125 0 0

Ditto on 986,000*l.*

for ditto

7,401 0 0

89,125 10 10½



To the Judges of England and Wales on their several additional allowances, for three months.	—	—	3,262	10	0
To Ann Cais, late office keeper in the office for managing the former duties on wine licences, for ditto	—	—	5	0	0
To Edward Roberts, Esq. first-clerk to the Clerk of the Pells, on the allowance of 6s. 6d. per annum, formerly paid to the auditor of the receipt of the Exchequer for salaries to the officers of the Exchequer	—	—	—	—	—
Bill-office, and now payable to him per act 23 Geo. III. for three months, due 5th April 1796	—	—	162	10	0
For the support of His Majesty's household	—	for ditto	—	—	—
To His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, on his annuity of 65,000l.	—	for ditto	224,500	0	0
To His Royal Highness the Duke of York, on ditto	—	for ditto	16,350	0	0
To Her Royal Highness the Dutchess of York, on ditto	—	for ditto	3,500	0	0
To His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, on ditto	—	for ditto	1,000	0	0
To ditto	—	for ditto	2,250	0	0
To His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, on ditto	—	for ditto	2,000	0	0
To the representatives of Arthur Onslow, Esq. on ditto	—	for ditto	3,000	0	0
To the Earl of Chatham	—	for ditto	750	0	0
To Lord Rodney	—	for ditto	1,000	0	0
To Lord Heathfield	—	for ditto	500	0	0
To the Earl of Bute, late one of the auditors of the imprest, on 7,000l.	—	for ditto	375	0	0
To Philip Deane, Esq. on 300l.	—	for ditto	1,750	0	0
To John Wiggleworth, Esq. on 300l.	—	for ditto	75	0	0
To Charles Harris, Esq. on 300l.	—	for ditto	75	0	0
To Sir William Mufgrave, Bart. one of the Commissioners for auditing the public accounts, on 1,000l.	—	for ditto	50	0	0
To John Thomas Batt, Esq. another	—	on 1,000l.	250	0	0
To William Chamberlayne, Esq. another	—	on 1,000l.	250	0	0
To Sir John Dick, Bart. another	—	on 500l.	250	0	0
To John Martin Leake, Esq. another	—	on 500l.	125	0	0
To Lady Dorchester	—	on 1,000l. per annum	125	0	0
To John Penn, Esq. of Stoke Pogia	—	on 3,000l. per annum	250	0	0
To Richard Penn, Esq.	—	on 1,000l. per annum	750	0	0
	—	—	250	0	0

For clerks contingencies in the office for auditing the public accounts	—	for ditto	—
To George Atwood, Esq. inspector of tonnage certificates to defray the expences attending the execution of an act 30 Geo. III. for converting certain annuities, with benefit of survivorship, into annuities for an absolute term of years	—	—	1,500 0 0
To John Reeves, Esq. receiver of the seven public offices established pursuant to an act 32 Geo. III. intituled, "An act for the more effectual administration of the office of Justice of the Peace in such parts of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, as lie in and near the metropolis, and for the more effectual prevention of felonies;" to enable him to discharge the salaries due to the said clerks justices, and incidental expences attendant on the said offices	—	—	300 0 0
To the Usher of the Exchequer, for necessaries for the quarter ended 5th July 1795	—	—	2,800 0 0
— 10th October 1795	—	—	715 16 5½
—	—	—	803 14 7¼
To the right honourable Henry Addington, Speaker of the House of Commons, to complete the sum of 1,500 <i>l.</i> for the quarter 25th March 1795, on 6,000 <i>l.</i> per annum, the sum of 800 <i>l.</i> having been received by fees, and the sum of 419 <i>l.</i> 1 <i>s.</i> payable at the Exchequer on the allowance of 5 <i>l.</i> a day out of the civil list, exclusive of fees	—	—	280 19 0
To the clerk of the office of the Clerk of the Pells, for their service in the execution of the acts 29 and 30 Geo. III. for granting annuities on lives, with benefit of survivorship, for six months, due 5th April 1796	—	—	440 0 0
To Sir George Yonge, Bart. master of His Majesty's mint in England	—	—	3,450 0 0
Total charge on the consolidated fund, for the quarter ending 5th April 1796	—	—	2,966,770 7 10½
Surplus of ditto	—	—	460,913 6 2¼
	—	—	£.3,427,683 14 1
<b>MEMORANDUM.</b> —The above sum of 460,913 <i>l.</i> 6 <i>s.</i> 2¼ <i>d.</i> is to be applied to the following purposes; viz.			
To the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the national debt	—	250,000 0 0	
In part of 2,895,000 <i>l.</i> granted for the service of the year 1795, out of the consolidated fund	—	210,913 6 2¼	
	—	—	£.460,913 6 2¼

An Account of the total value of the Imports into Great Britain, in the years 1792, 1793, 1794, and 1795, distinguishing each year, and also distinguishing each Kingdom, State, and Colonies, from whence imported.

Names of the Kingdoms, States, and Colonies.	1792.		1793.		1794.		1795.	
Denmark, — —	186,649	0 8	205,822	13 6	209,885	12 5	154,335	18 4
Russia, — —	1,708,671	9 5	1,804,025	12 11	1,789,448	7 2	1,857,978	4 8
Sweden, — —	338,690	8 5	307,395	5 5	287,784	1 4	294,612	0 3
Poland, — —	122,321	11 7	275,497	2 7	202,222	2 9	137,507	14 2
Prussia, — —	481,664	4 7	630,888	14 3	410,088	8 8	412,511	12 6
Germany, — —	650,437	1 5	794,095	16 2	796,138	1 6	1,020,632	14 9
Holland, — —	801,535	1 6	866,305	13 1	1,013,351	10 1	119,586	9 10
Austrian Flanders, — —	132,289	11 5	120,180	7 4	76,820	13 9	4,287	2 0
France, — —	717,634	15 10	121,027	16 1	167	1 4	10,362	11 6
Portugal, — —	966,467	5 11	471,650	9 9	709,860	15 2	842,794	6 10
Madeira, — —	11,353	9 0	10,541	6 1	4,527	12 1	5,755	15 10
Spain, — —	897,840	12 1	485,872	18 1	748,546	10 6	992,853	13 6
Canaries, — —	10,222	14 4	4,369	4 10	11,404	2 4	15,082	12 2
Streights, — —	3,276	12 1	1,737	5 4	4,194	17 0	4,130	4 10
Gibraltar, — —	9,878	6 3	4,019	13 5	7,245	17 2	13,902	16 6
Italy, — —	1,004,289	4 10	584,602	18 7	662,775	9 8	517,099	7 4
Venice, — —	65,331	13 11	36,076	5 5	44,474	5 11	79,779	9 10
Turkey, — —	290,599	7 1	184,681	4 1	324,906	9 9	84,684	9 6
Ireland, — —	2,622,733	2 1	2,284,920	12 9	2,749,900	7 11	2,636,705	14 2
Isle of Man, — —	27,343	8 6	36,929	0 1	19,433	14 6	29,284	2 6
— Alderney, — —	48	13 11	67	13 2	18	10 0	25	12 6
— Guernsey, — —	41,139	7 3	52,812	13 8	71,270	17 6	97,104	19 11
— Jersey, — —	17,664	17 10	13,395	8 4	15,743	9 6	15,385	19 8
— Greenland, — —	63,778	12 11	77,908	5 10	72,781	5 10	90,315	5 0
Total of all Europe — —	11,171,860	12 10	9,314,825	0 9	10,232,990	3 10	9,467,181	16 1

New England,	101,616	18	8	88,701	9	6	40,401	2	9	154,013	10	11
New York,	156,769	12	0	149,975	13	3	92,947	2	0	165,864	18	8
Pennsylvania,	42,620	8	10	68,798	8	3	35,809	17	0	48,510	18	4
Maryland,	118,400	5	1	102,198	10	6	35,388	11	3	78,741	2	3
Virginia,	309,482	1	4	262,681	1	4	294,219	7	7	189,467	10	8
North Carolina,	44,656	0	4	28,000	13	11	8,012	18	8	19,340	8	2
South Carolina,	219,839	6	9	167,625	9	7	104,055	19	2	235,049	17	0
Georgia,	45,232	16	0	36,059	1	4	14,898	15	3	28,543	9	7
Total of the States	1,038,707	9	0	904,040	7	8	625,733	13	8	1,352,136	15	7
Adson's Bay,	18,492	9	0	16,291	6	3	15,452	2	9	7,636	9	3
Newfoundland,	47,778	8	2	29,625	4	5	49,174	16	11	47,168	16	3
St. John's Island,	171	5	11	95	9	0	404	7	2	—	—	—
Mananada,	111,851	8	0	100,251	3	6	97,480	9	10	173,074	8	8
New Brunswick,	7,491	0	2	718	4	10	9,991	6	7	8,137	1	4
Nova Scotia,	14,906	9	8	10,801	15	3	10,665	18	7	8,267	15	11
Terremeruda,	1,600	18	11	2,137	1	1	9,927	17	3	4,636	12	5
St. Thomas,	53,417	14	8	50,407	7	4	47,929	15	1	65,840	6	2
Isle of Breton,	88	8	0	18	0	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total British Colonies	255,798	2	6	210,345	12	3	241,026	14	2	314,761	10	0



Curassoa	—	10,318	19	5	837	10	0	—	—	—	14,425	14	0
Demarara	—	—	—	—	3,837	17	10	—	—	—	27,903	14	10
Marigalante	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,648	3	0
St. Bartholomew	—	787	4	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,388	13	5
St. Croix	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	554	12	10	2,922	4	0
St. Eustatius	—	22,251	14	5	28,096	18	8	28,293	14	7	—	—	—
St. Martin	—	3,945	18	11	1,530	19	0	9,786	6	8	—	—	—
St. Thomas	—	20,982	28	3	11,593	9	9	31,492	11	8	46,288	4	3
Trinidad	—	—	—	—	5,787	11	11	32,275	17	4	42,950	15	11
Yucatan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Faulkland's Islands	—	507	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Honduras Bay	—	64,509	2	3	47,192	10	0	42,885	4	7	20,366	7	0
Florida	—	25,035	12	2	24,986	5	9	8,119	18	3	16,524	6	8
Nootka Sound	—	—	—	—	610	8	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Southern Fishery	—	122,549	18	6	165,120	16	8	107,375	19	1	82,992	2	8
Asia	—	1,701,547	9	4	3,499,023	12	10	4,458,475	1	5	—	—	—
Africa	—	82,912	7	0	120,378	9	11	48,880	3	10	65,097	9	8
Grand Total	—	19,659,358	6	7	18,696,593	15	0	21,173,751	14	3	—	—	—
Prize Goods	—	—	—	—	560,123	14	8	1,115,142	6	2	877,632	15	1

An Account of the total value of the Exports from Great Britain, in the years 1792, 1793, 1794, and 1795, year, and also distinguishing each Kingdom, State, and Colony, and to which exported.

Names of the Kingdoms, States, and Colonies.	1792.			1793.			1794.			1795.		
Denmark, —	312,720	11	5	291,265	6	7	489,184	18	2	498,464	0	8
Russia, —	800,762	3	0	320,827	19	8	495,907	8	2	832,267	0	1
Sweden, —	118,340	14	10	76,424	16	7	105,273	19	10	127,157	18	6
Poland, —	67,075	3	4	68,444	10	5	75,696	9	5	89,429	9	10
Prussia, —	99,903	8	9	106,499	12	5	226,910	8	8	270,410	11	5
Germany, —	2,139,111	1	6	2,482,695	10	11	5,943,225	5	10	8,072,009	6	0
Holland, —	1,516,449	8	2	1,616,783	5	9	1,640,916	3	1	74,373	7	8
Austrian Flanders, —	1,031,093	3	1	776,089	6	8	671,533	3	7	13,508	1	10
France, —	1,228,160	3	9	228,887	11	7	34,543	0	6	115,395	5	3
Portugal, —	709,620	14	5	547,135	2	1	556,148	1	8	556,383	7	1
Madeira, —	45,002	5	3	35,967	12	9	34,546	17	2	152,353	19	10
Spain, —	794,101	11	7	476,726	17	10	634,654	0	8	436,830	19	4
Canaries, —	17,277	9	8	26,120	10	7	17,866	7	2	32,773	5	4
Freights, —	73,957	1	9	19,594	15	10	6,660	8	3	5,717	12	6
Siberia, —	123,167	4	1	116,110	7	9	113,629	15	7	134,588	2	1
Italy, —	946,120	11	3	532,688	10	8	597,237	19	4	829,319	7	7
Venice, —	17,112	14	0	10,954	3	3	13,322	11	6	33,815	17	2
Turkey, —	273,785	17	8	45,270	4	10	117,700	3	8	149,938	13	3
Ireland, —	2,372,866	17	10	1,943,324	15	7	2,480,476	3	2	2,797,403	15	9
Isle of Man, —	37,528	7	8	50,264	13	4	49,328	4	0	40,232	7	3
— Alderney, —	1,524	5	0	1,702	8	2	1,689	0	10	3,178	6	10
— Guernsey, —	55,350	5	5	86,902	2	3	75,415	12	0	102,864	10	7
— Jersey, —	35,256	1	3	45,481	15	7	62,659	6	10	83,565	19	3
Greenland, —	6,6	3	7	1,020	9	0	127	16	0	636	6	8
Total of all Europe, —	12,817,049	8	3	9,907,179	10	1	14,445,003	5	1	15,452,867	11	9

New England,	—	614,363	0	2	435,825	13	8	517,445	16	2	672,337	2	11
New York,	—	834,041	13	8	763,980	15	6	1,221,997	14	4	1,346,534	3	01
Pennsylvania,	—	781,074	5	9	855,206	3	2	768,832	19	4	1,307,736	13	4
Maryland,	—	505,119	3	9	547,583	0	6	640,129	9	9	656,148	2	8
Virginia,	—	846,517	17	10	549,032	12	4	662,160	6	8	771,487	2	1
North Carolina,	—	38,157	12	7	25,512	6	2	9,293	8	5	15,768	11	6
South Carolina,	—	575,266	19	8	311,274	16	0	227,588	2	6	470,420	9	7
Georgia,	—	76,877	15	10	26,266	3	7	12,423	14	8	13,573	12	8
Total of the States,	—	4,271,418	9	3	3,514,681	10	11	3,859,871	11	10	5,254,114	18	7
Hudson's Bay,	—	49,835	2	10	26,194	12	2	83,238	15	9	32,590	7	5
Newfoundland,	—	151,187	4	7	136,043	9	6	130,041	17	11	132,801	19	10
St. John's Island,	—	6,224	10	3	4,280	3	4	886	15	11	1,633	5	8
Canada,	—	524,292	13	10	424,775	14	8	399,920	14	7	357,698	7	10
New Brunswick,	—	76,999	17	7	53,494	2	10	42,811	13	9	92,166	11	19
Nova Scotia,	—	173,132	6	8	111,043	18	6	121,037	14	0	170,479	1	6
Bermuda,	—	35,055	0	7	22,420	14	5	46,903	10	0	28,232	12	7
Bahamas,	—	102,753	9	7	126,238	10	6	146,430	19	3	184,178	18	3
Cape Breton,	—	511	3	0	31	5	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total British Continental Colonies,	—	1,119,991	8	8	904,522	10	11	971,271	12	2	999,781	4	11





[illegible]

**THOMAS IRVING,**  
Inspector General of the Imports and Exports of Great Britain.

Inspector General's Office,  
Custom House, London,  
April 12th, 1796.

An ACCOUNT of the total Value of the Imports into, and Exports from Great Britain, in the last ten years, distinguishing each year.

IMPORTS.				EXPORTS.			
1786	15,786,072	7	5	16,305,866	8	2	
1787	17,804,014	16	1	16,869,789	6	6	
1788	18,027,170	1	3	18,124,072	15	9	
1789	17,821,102	10	7	19,340,548	17	7	
1790	19,130,886	5	3	20,120,121	17	2	
1791	19,669,782	13	7	22,731,995	7	3	
1792	19,659,358	6	7	24,905,200	3	5	
1793	19,256,717	9	8	20,390,180	6	10	
1794	22,288,894	—	5	26,748,083	8	10	
1795	—	—	—	27,270,553	—	5	

Inspector General's Office,  
Custom-House, London,  
April 12th, 1796.

THOMAS IRVING,  
Inspector General of the  
Imports and Exports of  
Great Britain.

Note. The importation of Goods from the East-Indies are not brought to account at the Custom House until six months after the date of each ship's report; and as several of the ships did not arrive last year until the month of December, therefore the account of the value of the Imports from India for that year cannot as yet be given.

An ACCOUNT of the Total Produce of the Duties of CUSTOMS, EXCISE, STAMPS, and INCIDENTS, respectively, for one Year, ended the 10th Day of October 1795; distinguishing (as far as possible) in each Branch, the Produce on every separate Article, the Duties on which have amounted to one thousand pounds, or more, in the four Quarters of the said Year, viz.

The total produce of the duties of customs for one year, ended the 10th day of October 1795, as per accmpt	—	—	3,412,255	6	8½
Ditto of the excise for one year, ended ditto (exclusive of 586,839l. 12s. the produce of the annual malt duties) as per accmpt	—	—	8,739,013	11	9½
Ditto of the stamp duties for one year, ended ditto, as per accmpt	—	—	1,609,906	19	3½
Ditto of incidents at the receipt of the Exchequer for one year, ended ditto, as per accmpt	—	—	1,940,331	13	0½
			15,701,507	10	10

Memorandum.—To the above sum of 3,412,255l. 6s. 8½d. the produce of the duties of customs, should be added 112,918l. 18s. 4d. the amount of the payments in the several ports for bounties for raising seamen, pursuant to acts of the 35th of the King.

Memorandum.—In the sum of 1,940,331l. 13s. 0½d. stated as the amount of incidents at the Exchequer, is included 24,175l. 12s. 2d. being the amount of imprests and other monies paid within the above period.

Presented, pursuant to an act of the 27th year of his present Majesty's reign, the 10th day of November 1795, by

An ACCOMPT of all additions which have been made to the annual charge of the PUBLIC DEBT; by the interest or annuities for or on account of any loan which hath been made, or any annuities which have been created, subsequent to the passing of an act of the 27th year of the reign of His present Majesty, intituled, "An act for  
 " repealing the several duties of customs and excise, and granting  
 " other duties in lieu thereof, and for applying the said duties,  
 " together with the other duties composing the public revenue;  
 " for permitting the importation of certain goods, wares, and  
 " merchandize, the produce or manufacture of the European do-  
 " minions of the French King, into this kingdom; and for ap-  
 " plying certain unclaimed monies remaining in the Exchequer for  
 " the payment of annuities on lives, to the reduction of the na-  
 " tional debt."

By virtue of an act 29th George 3d, the sum of 187,000l. was raised by annuities, after the rate of 7l. 9s. 9d. per cent. per annum, for the term of 18 years and 3 quarters, from the 5th day of April 1789, and then to cease; which annuities were directed by the said act to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities granted by two acts of the 18th and 19th years of His present Majesty, payable half-yearly at the Bank of England, and charged upon the consolidated fund; the amount whereof, with the charges of management for the same, for the year ended the 10th of October 1795, was

14,159 2 10

By virtue of one other act of the same session, the sum of 1,002,500l. was directed to be raised by annuities on lives, with the benefit of survivorship, distributed into classes, and to be paid at the Exchequer, and charged upon the consolidated fund (but by certain persons neglecting to complete their whole payments a deficiency was occasioned, whereby the sum on which the annuities were granted amounted to the sum of 1,002,099); part of which said annuities, by an act of the 30th year of His said Majesty's reign, were converted into annuities for a certain term of 69 years and one quarter, from the 10th day of October 1790, and were directed by the said act to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities granted by two acts of Parliament, of the first and second years of the reign of His present Majesty, and several subsequent acts, payable at the Bank of England; viz.

The charge for the annuities on lives, payable at the Exchequer, for one year, from the 10th day of October 1794 to the 10th day of October 1795 42,862 1 0

Whereof has been reserved at the Exchequer for the use of the public, and carried to the consolidated fund, in

respect of the nominees appointed by the commissioners of the treasury, for the quarter ended the 5th day of July 1795	—	12,230	16	4½
Reserved also at the Exchequer, to be carried to the consolidated fund, for the quarter which will end the 5th day of January 1796	—	12,232	13	7½
		<hr/>	24,463	10 0¼

Whereby the charge to the public is reduced to — 18,398 10 11¾

The charge for annuities and management, payable at the Bank of England, for the annuities to continue 69 years and one quarter, for one year, ended the 10th day of October 1795 — 24,639 7 2

The charge incurred by George Atwood Esq. Inspector of the tontine certificates, to defray the expence attending the execution of the above-mentioned acts of Parliament — 700 0 0

The charge for the clerks in the office of the clerk of the pells, for their service in executing the said acts, for one year, ended the 10th day of October 1795 — 880 0 0

To the usher of the Exchequer, for necessaries furnished the offices for managing these annuities, in the year ended the said 10th

day of October

1795.

696 11 9

26,915 18 11

45,314 9 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ 59,473 12 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

By virtue of an act 33d George 3d, the sum of 4,500,000l. was borrowed for the service of the year 1793, the contributors whereof were entitled for every 72l. contributed and paid, to 100l. capital stock, after the rate of 3l. per cent. per annum, amounting to 6,250,000l. and to be added to, and made one joint stock with, the 3 per centum annuities, consolidated by acts 25th, 28th, 29th 32d, and 33d. George 2d, and several subsequent acts, to commence from the 5th day of January 1793.

The charge in respect of the same, for one year's annuity and management, amounts to — — —

190,312 10 0

In pursuance of an act 32d George 3d, cap. 55. directing the one hundredth part of any loan or capital stock created after passing the said act, there is set apart at the Exchequer, in respect to the said capital of 6,250,000l. and issued quarterly to the Bank of England, to be by them placed to the account of the commissioners for reducing the national debt, the annual sum of — — — — —

62,500 0 0

252,812 10 0

An ACCOMPT of the produce of the duties imposed for the purpose of defraying the increased charge occasioned by the annuities granted in pursuance of the following acts; viz. An act of the 29th year of the reign of His present Majesty, intituled, "An act for raising a certain sum of money by way of annuities;" and of one other act of the same session of Parliament, intituled, "An act for raising a certain sum of money by way of annuities, attended with the benefit of survivorship, in classes;" part of which annuities were, by an act 30th George 3d, cap. 45, converted into annuities for an absolute term of years; viz.

The produce of the additional duties on horses, granted from the 5th day of July 1789, for one year, ended the 10th day of October 1795 — — —

15,287 18 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

Ditto of the additional duties on carriages, granted from ditto, for the same time — — —

16,434 14 4

Ditto of the additional duties on newspapers, granted from the 1st day of August 1789, for the same time — — —

39,035 19 5

Ditto of the additional duties on advertisements, ditto — — —

11,750 2 0

Ditto of the additional duty on cards, ditto — — —

5,656 3 0

Ditto of the additional duty on dice, ditto — — —

388 10 0

Ditto of the duties on legacies or shares of personal estates, ditto — — —

7,727 0 0

Ditto of the Duties on probates of wills ditto — — —

36,605 0 0

122,880 7 8 $\frac{1}{2}$

The amount of the charges for annuities, &c., as on the other side	59,473 12 8½
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Surplus of these duties for the year ended the 10th of October 1795	73,411 14 11½
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#### Memorandum

In the year 1789 the tax on shops was repealed; which produced, upon a medium of 3 years, about 51,000*l.* per annum.

An ACCOMPT of the produce of the duties directed by an act 33d George 3d, to be applied in aid of the consolidated fund in respect of the charge thereupon by the annuity and management on 6,250,000*l.* payable out of the said fund; viz.

The produce of the additional duties on British spirits, continued by the above-mentioned act, in the year ended the 10th of October 1795	119,043 0 0
Ditto of the additional duties on foreign spirits, continued by ditto for the same time	107,151 0 0
	226,194 0 0
Deficiency of this fund to satisfy the charge per contra	26,618 10 0
	252,812 10 0

By virtue of an act 34th George 3d, the sum of 11,000,000*l.* was borrowed for the service of the year 1794, upon the following terms; viz.

The contributors to be entitled, for every 100*l.* contributed and paid, to 100*l.* capital, at 3 per cent. per ann. to commence from the 5th of January 1794, to be added to, and made one joint stock with, 3*l.* per cent. annuities, consolidated by acts 25th, 28th, 29th, 32d, and 33d, George 2d, and several subsequent acts: which for one year, ended the 5th of July 1795, with 4,950*l.* per annum for management, — 334,950 0 0

And to an additional capital of 25*l.* at 4*l.* per cent. per annum, to commence from the 10th of October 1793, making a capital stock of 2,750,000*l.* to be added to, and made one joint stock with, the capital stock of 4*l.* per cent. annuities, established by 2 acts of the 21st and 22d years of the reign of His present Majesty, and several subsequent acts; which for one year's annuity, together with 1,237*l.* 10*s.* for the charges of management, due 10th October 1795 111,237 10 0

And also to an annuity of 11*s.* 5d. per cent. on the said 11,000,000*l.* to commence from the said 10th October 1793, to continue for the term of 66 years and 3 months, and to be added to the joint stock of annuities, which by 2 acts of the 1st and 2d years of the reign of His present Majesty were granted for 98 and 99 years, from the 5th of January 1761, and the 5th of January 1762 respectively, and then to cease; which annuity for one year, together with 706*l.* 8*s.* 14d. for charges of management. due the

In pursuance of the act of the 32d George 3d, directing the one-hundredth part of any loan or capital stock created after passing the said act, there is set apart at the Exchequer, in respect of the said 11,000,000l. in 3l. per cent. annuities, and issued quarterly to the Bank of England, to be by them carried to the account of the commissioners for reducing the national debt, the annual sum of ———— 110,000 0 0

And in respect of the capital of 2,750,000l. in 4l. per cent. annuities, created by the said act 34th George 3d, the farther annual sum of ———— 27,500 0 0

And also in respect of the future annual value of the annuities granted for 66 years and 3 months, at the end of 45 years, the farther annual sum of ———— 9,680 0 0

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656,865 11 5½

By 2 acts 34th George 3d, for granting annuities in lieu of certain navy and victualling bills, such proprietors of navy and victualling bills as were made out on or before the 31st of March 1793, who should deliver up their bills to be cancelled, were to be entitled, for every 100l. contained in such bills, to a capital of 101l. in annuities at 5l. per cent. per annum, to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain 5l. per cent. annuities, established by 2 acts of the 24th and 25th years of the reign of His present Majesty, and to commence from the 5th of January 1794, whereby an addition was made to the said capital stock of 5l. per centum annuities, granted by the said acts of the 24th and 25th George 3d, of 1,926,525l. 12s. 5d. the annuity payable for the same, together with 866l. 18s. 8½d. for charges of management, amounts to 97,193 4 3½

Pursuant to the above-mentioned act of the 32d George 3d, directing the one-hundredth part of any loan or capital stock created after passing the said act, there is set apart at the Exchequer, in respect of the said capital of 1,926,525l. 12s. 5d. and issued quarterly to the Bank of England, to be by them carried to the account of the commissioners for reducing the national debt, the annual sum of ————

19,265 5 0

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116,458 9 3½

773,324 0 9



The produce of the following duties, granted or continued by sundry acts of Parliament of the 34th year of the reign of his present Majesty, for defraying the increased charge on the consolidated fund by annuities, &c. established by several acts 34th George 3d, for one year, ended the 10th day of October 1795; viz.

The produce of the additional duties on British spirits, granted from the 21st of February 1794	—	120,209	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties on foreign spirits, granted from ditto	—	111,733	0	0
Ditto of the stamp duties on indentures of Clerkships to Solicitors and Attornies, granted from the 5th of February 1794	—	16,195	13	6
Ditto of the additional duties of excise on bricks and tiles, granted from the 28th of March 1794	54,279	0	0	
Ditto of the additional duties of customs on bricks and tiles, granted from ditto	—	360	0	0
		54,639	0	0
Ditto of the additional duties on glafs, granted from the 17th of April 1794	—	56,592	0	0
Ditto of the duties on slate, stone, and marble, granted from the 5th of July 1794	—	16,278	11	6
Ditto of the duties of excise on distilleries, and of licences to distillers in Scotland, after deducting therefrom the annual sum of	36,000	0	0	42,000
Ditto of the duties of excise on paper, granted from the 5th of April 1794	137,996	0	0	
Ditto of the duties of customs on paper, granted from ditto	—	4,113	6	10
		142,109	6	10
Deduct				
The annual sum directed by an act 34th George 3d, Cap. 20. to be set apart out of the duties on paper, to be carried to the consolidated fund	—	75,000	0	0
		67,109	6	10
		484,756	11	10
Deficiency of this fund to answer the charge per contra		288,567	8	11
		773,324	0	9

#### Memorandum.

The following duties being applicable to the payment of principal and interest of Exchequer bills, to the amount of 1,833,000*l.* issued pursuant to an act 31st George 3d, for defraying the expences occasioned by the augmentation of the forces in the year 1790, of which bills there were cancelled, on the 10th of October 1795, 1,701,000*l.*: When the remaining 132,000*l.* with the interest thereon, shall be discharged, the said duties, pursuant to the several acts for that purpose, will be carried to and made a part of the consolidated fund, on account of the charges brought thereon, in consequence of the debt incurred by the money raised in 1794; viz.

The produce of the duties on sugar, in the year ended the 10th of October 1795, was	—	196,371	19	7
Ditto of the stamp duty on certificates issued for killing game, in the same time	—	16,023	9	2
Ditto of the duties on bills and receipts, in the same time (after deducting 128,600 per annum, carried to the consolidated fund)	—	38,309	8	10
Ditto of the 10l. per cent. on assessed taxes	—	94,415	5	2½
		345,120	2	9½

If, therefore, this sum of 345,120l. 2s. 9½d. is added to the produce of the taxes imposed in 1794, amounting as above to 484,756l. 11s. 10d. it will make the produce of all the taxes imposed and continued, in respect of the addition made to the public debt in 1794 829,876 14 7½

By virtue of an act 35th George 3d, the sum of 18,000,000l. was borrowed for the service of the year 1795, the contributors whereof were entitled, for every 100l. contributed and paid, to 100l. stock in annuities, at 3l. per cent. to commence from the 5th of January 1795, and to be incorporated into, and made one joint stock with, the 3l. per cent. consolidated annuities, which were granted by acts 25th, 28th, 29th, 32d, and 33d, Geo. II. and by several subsequent acts; and also to 33l. 6s. 8d. in annuities, at 4l. per cent. to commence from the 10th of October 1794, and to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain 4l. per cent. annuities, established by 2 acts of Parliament, of the 20th and 21st years of his present Majesty's reign, and by several subsequent acts; and by the said act also to a farther annuity of 8s. 6d. per cent. per annum, for a certain term of 65 years and 3 months, to commence from the 10th of October 1694; and also, by one other act of the same session, to an additional duty of 1s. per cent. per annum from the same time, and for the same term, making together, 9s. 6d. per cent. per annum, and to be together incorporated into, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities which were granted for 99 and 98 years, from the 5th of January 1761, and the 5th of January 1762 (and then to cease) and were made one joint stock of annuities with certain other annuities, by divers acts of his present Majesty's reign: All which several annuities, and the charges attending the same, are charged upon and made payable out of the consolidated fund; viz.

The annual charge in respect of the 18,000,000l. at 3l. per cent. per annum, granted by the said act, commencing from the 5th of January 1795, including 8,100l. per annum for management, amounts to	548,100	0	0
The annual charge of the said 4l. per cent. annuities of 33l. 6s. 8d. for each 100l. contributed, making a capital of 6,000,000l. commencing from the 10th of October 1794, including 2,700l. per annum for management, amounts to	242,700	0	0
The annual charge of 9s. 6d. per cent. per annum, on the said 18,000,000l. commencing from the said 10th of October 1794, to continue 65 years and 3 months, including 961l. 17s. 6d. per annum for management, amounts to	86,461	17	6
The one-hundredth part of the said 18,000,000l. to be set apart at the Exchequer, and issued to the Bank			

of England, to be by them carried to the account of the commissioners for reducing the national debt, pursuant to the act 3<sup>d</sup> Geo. III. will amount to the annual sum of ————

180,000    •    •

The one-hundredth part of the said 6,000,000*l.* in 4*l.* per cent. annuities, to be set apart at the Exchequer, and issued to the Bank, to be carried to the account of the said commissioners, will amount to the annual sum of ————

60,000    •    •

The annual sum to be set apart at the Exchequer, to be issued to the Bank, and to be carried to the account of the said commissioners, in respect of the value of the annuities granted for 65 years and 3 months, at the end of 45 years, amounts to ————

12,835    •    •

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1,130,096    17    6

By an act 35<sup>th</sup> George 3<sup>d</sup>, for granting annuities to satisfy navy and victualling bills, such proprietors of navy and victualling bills as were made out on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 1793, who should deliver up their bills to be cancelled, were entitled, for every 100*l.* contained in such bills, to a capital of 108*l.* in annuities, after the rate of 5*l.* per cent. per annum, to commence from the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 1795, and to be added to, and made one joint stock with, certain annuities established by the acts 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 34<sup>th</sup> years of His Majesty's reign, whereby an addition was made to the capital of 5*l.* per cent. annuities, granted by the said acts, of 1,609,897*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* the annual sum payable in respect of the same amounts to ————

80,494    17    10

And for management of the same, to the annual sum of ————

724    9    1

---

81,219    6    11

The annual sum to be set apart at the Exchequer, in respect of the one hundredth part of the said capital of 1,609,897*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* pursuant to the above-mentioned act of the 32<sup>d</sup> George 3<sup>d</sup>, will amount to ————

16,098    19    6

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97,318    6    5

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1,227,415    3    11

The produce of the following duties, granted by sundry acts of Parliament of the 35<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of his present Majesty, for defraying the increased charge on the consolidated fund, in respect of the an-

nuities, &c. established by the acts 35th George 3d, from the commencement of the said duties to the 10th day of October 1795; viz.		
The produce of the additional duties on wines, granted from the 23d of February 1795	591,876	0 0
Ditto of the additional duty on sweets, from ditto	4,416	0 0
Ditto of the additional duties on British spirits, granted from ditto	63,777	0 0
Ditto of the additional duties on foreign spirits, granted from ditto	28,076	0 0
Ditto of the additional duties on tea, granted from the 16th of March 1795	81,744	0 0
Ditto of the additional duties on coffee and cocoa nuts, granted from ditto	9,486	0 0
Ditto of the duties on fruit, salad oil, waste silk, &c. granted from the 5th of April 1795	40,867	14 3
Ditto of the additional duty on the exportation of rock salt and coals, granted from ditto	4,467	9 3
Ditto of the duty on certificates issued for using hair powder, granted from the 5th of May 1795	187,085	15 0
Ditto of the additional stamp duties on writs, agreements, indentures, &c. granted from the 5th of July 1795	8,713	15 8
Ditto of the additional stamp duties on receipts, granted from ditto	4,204	0 0
Ditto of the stamp duty on sea insurances, granted from ditto	16,059	19 0
	<hr/>	
	1,040,773	13 2
	<hr/>	

Presented pursuant to an act of the 27th year of His present Majesty's reign, the 10th November 1795, by

G. ROSE.

An ACCOUNT of the Money paid to the different DEPARTMENTS, payable from His Majesty's CIVIL LIST REVENUES, from 5th January 1795, to 12th September 1795.

For the use and service of His Majesty's privy purse, and fees payable on the receipt thereof	41,169	4 0
To the Royal family on their several annuities	106,875	0 0
To the Duke of Montrose, Master of the Horse to His Majesty, for the expences of his office	25,076	10 0
To the Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's household, for the expences of the chamber	52,158	11 8½
More to him for payment of messengers	14,000	0 0
More to him for gate alms and maundy money	759	10 0
George Talbot, Esq. Paymaster of His Majesty's household, for the expences of the household	47,373	7 1½
More to him for expences attending the voyage of the Princess of Wales	7,000	0 0
To Lord Selfey, Master of the Robes to His Majesty, for the expences of his office	2,113	10 0

For salaries and allowances to Judges, Ambassadors, and various other persons, payable by order and debenture out of the civil list	237,448	19	10½
For pension lists now paid at the Exchequer	51,958	1	3
For foreign secret service	126,029	15	6
For the relief of the suffering clergy and laity of France	102,590	0	0
For His Majesty's special service	16,789	17	4
For His Majesty's secret service	8000	0	0
For payment of messengers and incidental expences in the offices of the principal Secretaries of State	18,874	0	11½
For the purchase of several articles, as presents from His Majesty to foreign Ambassadors, &c.	3,756	8	0
For the expence of confining and maintaining convicts	14,195	7	½
To re-imburse the expence attending lawsuits for His Majesty's service	13,000	0	0
To be paid over, as pensions and temporary support for American loyalists	34,000	0	0
To the Solicitors for carrying on the prosecution against Warren Hastings, Esq.	5,000	0	0
To the several Sheriffs of England and Wales for conviction of felons, &c.	4,104	19	4½
For the expences attending the several public offices in London and Westminster	7,950	5	3
To reimburse sundry incidental expences incurred in His Majesty's service	13,443	7	8½
To pay bills of extra extraordinary disbursements drawn by Ministers at foreign courts	7,628	16	11
	<hr/>		
	961,295	12	5½

#### Memorandum:

In the sum of 961,295l. 12s. 5½d. is included 281,432l. 18s. 7½d. voted by Parliament, in the last session, to be replaced to the civil list; and out of the whole sum has been issued 213,585l. 19s. 6d. for similar services within the period of this account, and of which an account has been laid before Parliament.

JAMES FISHER.

Exchequer, the 3d day  
of March 1796.

An Account of money received on the Loan of 1795, on the 12th of September 1795.

The money received on the Loan of 1795, on the 12th of September 1795, amounts to the sum of sixteen millions six hundred seventy-five thousand pounds.

Exchequer, the 3d day of  
March 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of money received for the Lottery of 1795, on the 12th of September 1795.

The money received for the Lottery of 1795, on the 12th of September 1795, amounts to the sum of three hundred ninety-three thousand five hundred and forty-one pounds thirteen shillings and four-pence.

Exchequer, the 3d day of  
March 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of what money had been issued on the Land and Malt tax for the year 1795, on the 12th of September, 1795.

The money that had been issued on the Land and Malt tax for the year 1795, on the 12th of September 1795, amounts to the sum of two millions seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

Exchequer, the 3d day of  
March 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of what sums had been raised on the Vote of Credit for 1795, on the 12th of September 1795.

The sums that had been raised on the Vote of Credit for 1795, on the 12th of September 1795, amount to two millions five hundred thousand pounds.

Exchequer, the 3d day of  
March 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

An Account of the monies reserved for the payment of His Majesty's Civil List, from the 4th of January 1795 to the 12th of September 1795.

The monies reserved for the payment of His Majesty's Civil List, from the 4th of January 1795 to the 12th of September 1795, amount to the sum of six hundred and seventy-three thousand five hundred pounds.

Exchequer, the 3d day of  
March 1796.

JAMES FISHER.

# REPORT from the Committee upon Temporary Laws, Expired or Expiring.

Ordered to be printed, 13th May, 1796.

The following is a List of the Members of the Committee.

Charles Abbot, Esq. chairman	Sir William Scott
The Master of the Rolls	William Mainwaring, Esq.
Mr. Attorney General	Henry Bankes, Esq.
Mr. Solicitor General	Thomas Powys, Esq.
Mr. Serjeant Adair	T. B. Bramston, Esq.
Right Hon. Charles Townshend	I. H. Browne, Esq.
Hon. Henry Hobart	Sir A. Ferguson, Bart.

HAVING inspected all the public statutes of the realm, so far as they were enabled by the transcripts which appear to have been printed from the original statute rolls and rolls of Parliament, and by this inspection having been led into some general considerations upon the statute law, your Committee conceive it may be not unprofitable to state them to the House, as preliminary to the particular consideration of the temporary laws, upon which they are ordered to report more especially.

1. In the first place, it appears to your Committee, that there is no authentic and entire publication of the statutes; \* that a very considerable number of statutes, as well as clauses and sentences of statutes, which are upon the original rolls, never have been printed at all †; that many, which

(\*) All the statutes are contained, either in the Parliament rolls, or statute rolls.

The Parliament rolls are deposited

from 18 Ed. I. to 22 Ed. I. - at the Chapter House, Westminster.

from 5 Ed. II. to end of Ed. IV. at the Tower.

from 1 Ric. III. downwards, at the Rolls.

N. B. 29 H. VI. is at the Chapter House.

The statute rolls are deposited

from 6 Ed. I. to 8 Ed. IV. at the Tower.

from 12 H. VII. downwards, at the Parliament Office.

N. B. 13 Ed. I. is at the Chapter House.

Of the statute rolls at the Tower, there is a complete chronological calendar; and of those in the Parliament office, there is one alphabetical calendar, indicating the principal matter of each statute, usually filed the short calendar; and there is also another chronological calendar of all the statutes, setting forth the title of each at large, and this is filed the long calendar.

† Instances of statutes, and clauses and sentences of statutes, upon the rolls, but not printed in the statute books.

Statutes,

18 Ed. III. - concerning ecclesiastical livings:

3 R. II. n. 39. Justices of Peace.

11 H. IV. n. 23. concerning grants of the Crown.

11 H. IV. n. 28. against corruption in judges.

11 H. IV. n. 63. against attorneys.

8 H. VI. n. 27. that the Queen Dowager shall not contract or marry without the King's licence.

See Hargr. Co. Lit. 1334-

are printed as statutes, do not exist upon record; or have not property the form or force of statutes; and that the statute law has through a series

- 3 H. VII. c. 10. n. 3. Moneyers not to debase the coin.  
 3 H. VIII. n. 10. concerning placing the Lords in the Parliament chamber.

Clauses, &c.

- 37 H. III. c. 19. - - See Nicolson's English Histor. Lib. p. 524.  
 18 Ed. III. St. 6. c. 1. See 4 Burr. 2549.  
 25 Ed. III. St. 6. See 2 Inst. 588, on the statute of provisors.  
 4 H. IV. c. 23. - - See 1 Rep. in Chancery. Appendix. X. 52.

And see Harleian MSS. n. 1574. 3. fo. 12. to 21. Observations on many old statutes; wherein the differences between the records and the printed books are noted; beginning 15 Ed. III. and ending 21 H. VI. See also, Sir Thomas Raymond's Rep. 1. 197. 2 Jo. 51. 2 Mod. 240. 2. Bla. 1102; and the book usually called Cotton's Abridgement of the Records in the Tower of London, but which was compiled by Bowyer, Keeper of the Tower Records, in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James the First, and completed by his son, as appears by the original manuscript in the herald's office.

• The printed statutes are sometimes distinguished into three classes, according to their date; viz.—1st. Such as precede time of legal memory, viz. 1 R. 1; and these are considered as part of the common law.—2d. Antiqua Statuta from 1 Ric. I. to Ed. 3.—3d. Nova Statuta, comprehending all subsequent statutes.

Of the first class, there is a MS. collection in the Bodleian library, by Sir Henry Spelman, in folio, and in his own hand writing, intitled, “Codex Legum Veterum & Statutorum Regni Angliæ quæ ab ingressu Gulielmi I. usque ad Annum Nonium Henrici Tertii edita sunt.”—Upon the MSS. is written an imprimatur, “July 5th, 1640, John Bramston:”—but it does not appear to have been published till Dr. Wilkins published it in his *Leges Anglo-Saxonicae*, in 1721.

As to the two other classes, some of the printed statutes are not to be found at present, either upon the Parliament rolls, or amongst the statute rolls: viz. the statutes of Merton, Marlbridge, Westminster, &c. beside 20 Ed. III. entitled, the Judges' oath; and 20 Ed. III. St. 1. c. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. &c. See also 4 Inst. 50. a. and Prynne on 4 Inst. 38. and Harleian MSS. 244. fo. 40: And the informality of others amongst the Antiqua Statuta, and even amongst the Nova, has made learned men doubt whether some of them have the force of statutes. Such are Statutum Hiberniæ 14 Hen. III.—De anno et Die. Bissextili, 21 Hen. III. Assisa Panis et Cerevisiæ, 51 Hen. III. Statutum de Scaccario, 51 Hen. III.—Statute of Mortmain, 7 Ed. I. statute of Rothelin, 10 Edw. I. and thus also 13. Ed. I. st. 4. called the statute circumspectæ agatis, is alleged to be a mere writ: the statute of fines, 10 Ed. I. is contended to be a mere rule of court; and the statute of wards, 28 Ed. I.; is said to be only a judicial note. See Nicolson's English Historic. Lib. p. 154. The statute 1 Ed. II. de militibus, is called a writ by Lord Coke, 2 Inst. 593. and Harg. Co. Lit. 69. a. So is the statute of Carlisle, 15 Ed. II. Nicolson's English Hist. Lib. p. 154. The statute entitled 17 Ed. II. st. 2. is denied to be any statute at all, by Madox, Bar. Angl. 272. and Har. Co. Lit. 67. a. v. 2. The statute 15



of six centuries, accumulated at length to a most voluminous mass, which is rapidly increasing, and has been nearly doubled in bulk within the last

Ed. III. st. 2. "Diffimulavimus, &c." is contended to be a mere proclamation. And 23 Ed. III. statute of labourers, c. 1. &c. is impeached by Barrington and by Harg. Co. Lit. 42. b. n. 1. though apparently supported in Fitzherbert, N. B. 167. B. In fact, it could not be a statute, for no Parliament was holden in that year.

With regard to the parliamentary forms of enacting laws, thus much seems to be agreed; that where the proceeding consisted only of petition from Parliament, and answer from the King, these were entered on the Parliament rolls; and if the matter was of a public nature, the whole was then usually styled an ordinance: if, however, the petition and answer were not only of a public, but a novel nature, they were then formed into an act by the King, with the aid of his council and judges, and entered on the statute roll. Many instances of these distinctions are to be found upon the rolls of Parliament. See 22 Edw. III. n. 20. 30. vol. 2. p. 203. Rot. Parl.—28 Edw. III. n. 16. vol. 2. p. 257.—37 Edw. III. n. 39. vol. 2. p. 280.—and 1 Ric. II. n. 56. vol. 3. p. 17. Butler & Harg. Co. Lit. 260. b. notis, and 3 Reeves Hist. Eng. Law, 143. An ordinance on the Parliament roll, with the King's assent upon it, has nevertheless equal force with a statute: and a respectuatur entered upon the roll in no degree lessens its authority. See stat. 11 H. IV. n. 28. cited and admitted in evidence on Lord Macclesfield's trial, State Trials, vol. 6. At the end of the reign of Henry VI. the petition began to be inserted in the body of the bill: in 13 Car. II. st. 2. c. 2. the form of expressing the authority by which each clause is enacted, was first introduced: and from that æra our statutes assumed the same form which they now bear.

The printed editions of the statutes are all of them defective in their contents, and different from each other. There were some parts printed by R. Pinson, in 1497 and 1514, from Magna Charta to the end of the reign of Edward the third, and called *Antiqua Statuta*. Other collections were published by Berthelot in 1543; others by Tottel in 1556. The most complete of the early editions goes under the name of Russell; it was printed by Norton and Bill, deputy printers to King James the First, in 2 vols. folio, 1618, containing acts from Magna Charta to the 7th of Jac. I. together with a great many which were then void, either by expiration or repeal, several of which are not contained in any of the subsequent editions. Afterwards Pulton, Keble in continuation of Pulton, &c. successively published their collections; and at length Serjeant Hawkins completed an edition of the statutes at large, in 6 vols. fo. down to 2 Geo. II. inclusive; professing to have collated its contents with the original records; though he was not made officially responsible for his accuracy. Pickering, Ruffhead, and Runnington have since continued the series: but the most correct continuance of the modern statutes is to be found in the yearly collection, printed by the King's printer from the statute rolls, which are in the Parliament Office: these yearly collections are printed in folio, and formerly were in the black letter, till this was changed to the Roman type in 34 Geo. III. for the sake of diminishing their bulk, which it does by about one third. They contain all the acts of a public nature, or which are made so by special clause; *iz.* acts for roads, navigations, drainage, and sometimes inclosures.

fifty years\*. That without presuming to question the policy of the statute law in any of its branches, your Committee cannot but observe the matter of it to be in many places discordant; in other places obsolete †; in others perplexed by its miscellaneous composition of incongruities §; and that

\* The following list of editions, and their respective contents, exhibits a view of the progressive increase of the statutes :

Editions. near			Volumes.	
Hawkins	500 Years — 1225 to 1734 —	VI.	} Folio.	XII.
	40 Years — 1734 to 1733 —	VI.		
Ruff head	500 Years — 1225 to 1699 —	III.	} Quarto.	XIX.
	60 Years — 1699 to 1762 —	VIII.		
	30 Years — 1762 to 1796 —	VIII.		
Runnington	500 Years — 1225 to 1735 —	V.	} Quarto.	XII.
	60 Years — 1735 to 1795 —	VI.		
	and Index —	I.		
Pickering	500 Years — 1225 to 1701 —	X.	} Octavo.	XL.
	60 Years — 1701 to 1763 —	XIV.		
	30 Years — 1763 to 1795 —	XIV.		
	Indexes —	II.		

The King's Printer annually publishes two thick folio volumes; the statutes 33 Geo. III. occupied 3,936 folio pages.

† Instances of discordant statutes :

These are what Jac. I. in his speech upon his accession calls, "divers cros and cussing statutes:" and see Harleian MSS. n. 244. in the report of such statutes as are fit to be repealed, and a new law to be drawn in their place.

‡ Obsolete statutes as far as such a denomination is known to the law of England, mean such only as are superceded, and indirectly repealed by subsequent statutes; no statute losing its validity by mere desuetude: obsolete in this sense are, all those relating to religious houses, which were abolished by 31 H. VIII.; and all those relating to the tenures, which were abolished by 12 Car. II. c. 24; those which regard Wales or Scotland prior to their respective unions with England; and those which regard our former dominions beyond sea, &c.

Obsolete in the popular sense, viz. by the non-existence of the subject matter of the law; are such as regard:—1°. Extinct states; viz. the Duchy of Burgundy—4 Ed. IV. c. 5.—2°. Coins no longer known: viz. Scottish coins—47 Ed. III. c. 2. 14 Ric. II. c. 1. Gally-halfpence, pollards, and crochets—27 Ed. I. c. 3. 11 Hen. IV. c. 5. Suskins and Dodkins—13 Hen. IV. c. 6. 3 Hen. V. c. 1.—3°. Pecuniary prices of trades and manufactures, long since changed: viz. waxchangers—11 H. VI. c. 12. Sweet wines—6 Ric. II. c. 7. Poultry—37 Ed. III. c. 3. Hats and caps—21 H. VIII. c. 9. Patten-makers—4 Ed. IV. 4 Hen. V. c. 3. Girdlers—15 Ric. II. c. 11.—4°. Arms long since laid aside; viz. bows, hand guns, cross bows—7 Ric. II. c. 13. 12 Ed. IV. c. 2. 1 Ric. III. c. 11. 3 Hen. VII. c. 13. 3 Hen. VIII. c. 3. 8 Eliz. c. 10. &c. &c. &c.

§ Hodge Podge Acts. These have been discontinued of late years; but the statute book abounds with them. The following are remarkable—10 Ann. c. 14. 8 Geo. II. c. 24. 10 Geo. II. c. 32. 15 Geo. II. c. 33. 22 Geo. II. c. 46. 27 Geo. II. c. 16. 28 Geo. II. c. 15. 4 Geo. III. c. 12: and two may be selected as patterns; viz.

style is for the most part verbose, tautologous, and obscure\*; all of which circumstances seem to have engaged the attention of Parliament at successive periods, but not to have produced any improvement, in the degree which their importance demands.

2. A general revision of the statute law appears to have been often recommended from the throne; to have been petitioned for by both Houses of Parliament; to have engaged the labours of successive Committees, and to have been undertaken by individuals under the sanction of royal and parliamentary authority; but never to have been carried forward to any degree of maturity. In Queen Elizabeth's reign, Lord Keeper Bacon drew up a plan for reducing, ordering, and printing the statutes of the realm; this was in 1577; and the Queen afterwards recommended to Parliament a general revision of the statute law in 1593†. King James the First, upon his accession to the Throne of England, and in subsequent periods of his reign, recommended also to Parliament a reform of all the statute law, and of the penal laws in particular‡; and a Committee of the

20 Geo. II. c. 42, for explaining the window tax act, there is to be found a clause, viz. § 3. That all existing, and all future statutes which mention England, shall also extend to Wales and Berwick upon Tweed, though not particularly named;—after which § 4. reverts to the window tax again.

17 Geo. c. 40. is entitled thus:

“An Act to continue the several laws therein mentioned, for preventing theft and rapine on the northern borders of England; for the more effectual punishing wicked and evil-disposed persons going armed in disguise, and doing injuries and violences to the persons and properties of His Majesty's subjects, and for the more speedy bringing the offenders to justice; for continuing two clauses to prevent the cutting or breaking down the bank of any river or sea bank, and to prevent the malicious cutting of hop-binds; and for the more effectual punishment of persons maliciously setting on fire any mine, pit, or delph of coal, or cannel coal; and of persons unlawfully hunting or taking any red or fallow deer in forests or chases, or beating or wounding the keepers or other officers in forests, chases, or parks; and for granting a liberty to carry sugars of the growth, produce, or manufacture of any of His Majesty's sugar colonies in America, from the said colonies directly to foreign parts in ships built in Great Britain, and navigated according to law; and to explain two acts relating to the prosecution of offenders for embezzling naval stores or stores of war; and to prevent the retailing of wine within either of the Universities in that part of Great Britain called England, without licence.”

\* Prolixity and tautology begin in the reign of Hen. VII. Instances of prolixity:

28 H. VIII. c. 7. § 28—a singular instance of a superfluous proviso.

1 Ed. VI. c. 1. and c. 12. 5 and 6 Ed. VI. c. 3. and c. 12—prolix and metaphorical style of preambles.

Instances of tautology passim.

† 1577. *Harleian MSS.* 249. fo. 117 & 118; and *Ld. Bacon's Works*, 4to. 2. vol. fo. 326.

‡ 1593. *Dewey's Journal*, 473. IV. *Parl. Hist.* 345. 372.

*Co. Rep.* in pref. V. *Parl. Hist.* 30. 395.

House of Commons was appointed in 1597, to consider of a bill for the abridging and reforming the excessive number of superfluous and burdensome penal laws \*. In the year 1610, a digesting and repealing of the penal law was expressly stipulated by the House of Commons, and acceded to by the House of Lords in their joint transaction of the great contract with the Crown †; and in the same reign Lord Bacon, Lord C. J. Hobart, Serjeant Finch, Mr. Noy, and others, by the King's command, made considerable progress in the general work of reforming and re-compiling the statute law ‡, which Lord "Bacon describes § as an excellent undertaking, of honour to His Majesty's times, and of good to all times;" and recommends in imitation of the statutes 27 Hen. VIII. c. 15. and 3, 4 Edw. VI. c. 11. for appointing Commissioners to examine and establish ecclesiastical laws, that Commissioners be named by both Houses for this purpose also, with power not to conclude, but only to prepare and propound the matter to Parliament.

During the Commonwealth, the same undertaking was resumed with ardour. In 1650 a Committee was named, with Lord Commissioner Whitelock at the head of it, "to revive all former statutes and ordinances now in force, and consider, as well which are fit to be continued, altered, or repealed, as how the same may be reduced into a compendious way and exact method, for the more ease and clearer understanding of the people;" and the Committee were empowered "to advise with the Judges, and to send for and to employ, and call to their assistance therein any other person whom they should think fit for the better effecting thereof, and to prepare the same for the farther consideration of the House, and to make a report thereof ¶." In 1652 Matthew Hale, Esq. (afterwards Lord Chief Justice Hale) Sir Anthony Ashley Cowper (afterwards Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury) and Rushworth, the historian, with other persons out of the House, were appointed to report to the Committee their opinions upon the inconveniences of the law; and a revised system of the law was reported to the House in the course of the same year \*\*. The same labour was afterwards transferred to other hands; but the work was not abandoned; and in 1653 a Committee was appointed to consider of a new model or body of the law ††.

After the restoration, Finch, Solicitor General (afterwards Earl of Nottingham and Lord Chancellor) Serjeant Maynard, Sir Robert Atkins, Mr. Prynne, and others, were appointed, in 1666, to be a Committee, "to confer with such of the Lords, the Judges, and other persons of the long robe, who have already taken pains and made progress in perusing

\* *Deve's Journal*, 553. *V. Parl. Hist.* 259.

† *Lord. Journ.* II. 661. *§ V. Parl. Hist.* 259.

‡ An elaborate report of all the statutes, from the stat. of Westminster, 3 Ed. I. to 7 Jac. I. which were actually repealed, or expired, or then fit to be repealed, and in what instances requiring new laws to be made in their place, is to be found in the British Museum. Probably it may be the very work spoken of by Lord Bacon, 2 vol. 546. It is drawn up as by authority, with detailed reasons for every proposed measure; noting also such statutes as were not then printed in Rastell; and distinguishing what were properly proclamations, and not statutes: a table is subjoined to it, exhibiting the result of the Report. Harleian MSS. n. 244.

§ 2d. vol. 410. 547.

¶ *VI. Comm. Journ.* 427.

\*\* *VII. Comm. Journ.* 58. 74. 249. 250.

†† *VII. Comm. Journ.* 304. *§ XX. Parl. Hist.* 213. 232. 236.

the statute laws ; and to consider of repealing such former statute laws as they shall find necessary to be repealed ; and of expedients of reducing all statute laws of one nature under such a method and head as may conduce to the more ready understanding and better execution of such laws.\*." This seems to be the last recorded instance of the sort. And thus it is that Parliament has hitherto failed to accomplish this general revision, and has now suffered it to sleep for more than a century, although the delay of it has annually augmented its necessity. The attention of modern times has perhaps been the less directed to this national work, as upon this subject our general histories, with too great an attention to matters of legislative or juridical importance, are wholly silent.

3. Your Committee cannot, in this place, abstain from submitting to the House, as the result of their observations upon this investigation, the extreme importance of obtaining a complete and authentic publication of the statutes ; and that, in their opinion, the surest method of proceeding at present to obtain it, would be by extracting them from the Parliament rolls (printed a few years ago in six volumes folio, by order of the King, upon the address of both Houses of Parliament, and to which an index and glossary remain to be added) completing them also from the statute rolls at the Tower, the Chapter House, and the Parliament Office ; so far as these two distinct sets of records continue to run in a parallel series. From thence the statute rolls in the Parliament Office are the only records which are strictly original, and they should be transcribed or collated throughout. This portion of the work would, however, be the less difficult, the public acts having already been printed from the statute roll, by the King's Printer, in modern times, and a regular series of them from 1 Will. III. being preserved in the custody of your officers.

With such a complete publication of the statute law, when provided, the plan for a revision might not be difficult to devise, however laborious in its execution. Adopting the idea of the Commissioners employed in the reign of James the First, but executing it more comprehensively, an examination might be instituted, and a Report made of all the laws ; enumerating them chronologically, and noting against each individually ; either, 1. An existing perpetual law ; and whether fit to stand, or to be repealed simpliciter, or to be repealed and replaced by a new law : or, 2. An existing, but expiring law, and whether fit to expire, or to be continued, or to be made perpetual : or, 3. Repealed, and whether fit to be re-enacted : or, 4. Expired, and whether fit to be revived.

The detail of such a work might be distributed, as Lord Keeper Bacon proposed to Queen Elizabeth †, by divisions between different sets of persons ; whose labours might proceed concurrently, and be afterwards submitted to the judgment of a superior commission, as Lord Chancellor Bacon proposed to James the First, to be appointed for the purpose of preparing a digested result of the whole matter for parliamentary consideration.

In the re-compiling of past laws, or the enactment of future laws, it becomes indispensably necessary to introduce a methodical order of distribution, and a precision and conciseness of style, to which it would be often of singular utility to add the prescribed forms of proceeding by way of schedule ; (such for instance, as are subjoined to the general highway acts,

\* *VIII. Comm. Journ.* 631. † *Harleian MSS.* n. 244.

‡ *Harleian MSS.* n. 24. 1.

13 Geo. III. c. 78, 84. and the act for rebuilding parsonages, 17 Geo. III. c. 53): wherever summary jurisdiction is given to inferior Magistrates, in the discharge of their multifarious and difficult duties, it is equally expedient to provide these means of facilitating the execution of the laws, for the ease of the Magistrate, and in many cases also for the benefit of the public revenue, and in all instances, for the safety or convenience of individuals.

4. Although such has hitherto been the fruitless labour of former ages in attempting a general revision of the statutes, it nevertheless appears to Your Committee, that partial amendments have taken place from time to time, and desultory expedients have been applied, with different degrees of efficacy, at different periods. Consolidation, or repeal, have been principally applied to the improvement of our perpetual laws; and the same desultory and occasional measures have been sometimes applied to our temporary statutes, which have also, from the peculiarity of their duration, attracted the more frequent attention of Parliament to their revival or continuance.

Some of the most distinguished and meritorious labours of Parliament in the consolidation of statutes, are to be seen in the general act for the regulation of artificers, 5 Eliz. c. 4; the general act for regulation of the navy, 22 Geo. II. c. 33; the general gunpowder act, 12 Geo. III. c. 61; the general highway acts, 13 Geo. III. c. 74, 84; the general militia act, 26 Geo. III. c. 107; the general custom house act, for duties and drawbacks; the general act for sheep and wool, 28 Geo. III. c. 28; the general corn act, 31 Geo. III. c. 30; and the general act for seamen's wages, 32 Geo. III. c. 28, &c. &c. The declaration contained in the preamble to statute 5 Eliz. c. 4. may serve as the best notice of the utility of consolidation; and as a standing document for promoting the future prosecution of similar labours. As an auxiliary to this plan of consolidation, or even as an intermediate substitute for it, the parliamentary abstract of the law, respecting seamen's wages, inserted first in the statute 31 Geo. II. c. 10, and since repeated, with improvements, in the statute 32 Geo. III. c. 67, may serve as a model for the instruction of the lower classes of men in their respective municipal rights and duties.

With regard to the repeal, revival, and continuance of statutes, it appears to your Committee, that this process has been entrusted to the express care of a Committee, specially named for this purpose, at least as far back as the reign of James the 1st. and that their attention was formerly directed also to the consideration of sleeping bills, and of bills brought into Parliament in former sessions, and not passed; the House requiring the opinion of these Committees upon the necessity or utility of renewing them\*. The effects of this vigilance are evident, when we observe, that in the reign of Elizabeth, nine general statutes of repeal and continuance were enacted; that statute 39 Eliz. c. 18. disposes of no less than fifty-three different acts of Parliament; that by 1 Jac. I. c. 25. fifteen are repealed, and forty-five revived or continued; and that by 21 Jac. I. c. 28. there were no less than sixty-four revived or continued, and seventy-one repealed.

\* 1604. *Comm. Journ. I.* 152.

1614. *Comm. Journ. I.* 457.

1667. *Comm. Journ. IX.* 3.

1673. *Comm. Journ. IX.* 296.

1673. *Comm. Journ. IX.* 296.

According to modern usage, it is only from this Committee, annually appointed to inquire what laws are immediately fit to be revived or continued, that any regular correction or improvement whatever is bestowed upon the statute law of Great Britain.

But the limited province of that Committee, or perhaps the limitation rather, with which its powers have been exercised since the restoration, has prevented its producing the same beneficial consequences as in earlier ages. Add to this, that the multiplicity and irregularity with which, in modern times, our temporary laws have been made or continued, has greatly enhanced the difficulty. In some instances, we may find a temporary law enacted, by the insertion of a clause in the body of a perpetual act, viz. 27 Geo. III. c. 13. § 22. and in other laws, which are wholly temporary, there is no settled form or certain place assigned to the operative words, which denote its continuance. We find its duration sometimes expressed in the preamble; as in the acts provided for the continuance of any particular war; sometimes in the first section, sometimes in the middle of the act; 4 Geo. III. c. 27. § 4. 6 Geo. III. c. 28. § 11. but generally at the close; sometimes it is to be collected only by inference. 34 Geo. III. c. 9. 34 Geo. III. c. 79, and 35 Geo. III. c. 15. and c. 80. The efficacy given to these laws is sometimes retrospective, as well as prospective; 16 Car. I. c. 4. Sometimes the existence of the law is made to depend upon the legislation of other countries; 24 Geo. III. St. 2. c. 14. And in other cases, it is declared, that after the principal provisions shall have ceased to operate, the act shall nevertheless remain in force for the punishment of offences committed in violation of it during its continuance; 29 Geo. III. c. 64.—34 Geo. III. c. 80. § 24.—The variety of periods prescribed for the duration of each statute, is such, that caprice herself seems to have exercised her full dominion, and displayed her uncontrolled powers over different clauses of the same law: a pregnant instance of this is exhibited in Sr. 36 Geo. III. c. 40. And the numberless continuances of statutes still remaining temporary in form, though permanent in their principle, strongly claims the attention of Parliament, as contributing to add complication to a labyrinth already too intricate\*. It is perhaps to be regretted also, that laws confined to cases of a limited description, but depending on some general principle, have not, by the means of such Committees, been extended to all the cases which fall within the range of the principle.†—But your Committee forbear to state any farther detail of their observations on these points, apprehensive that they may have already expatiated upon them too largely.

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\* In the second part of the appendix to this Report, in the folio edition, all the instances may be seen of these subsidiary statutes. Some still temporary have been kept alive by no less than thirteen successive statutes in the present century.

† Thus, by 4 Geo. II. c. 18. to forge Mediterranean passes, is made a capital felony. But the offence is described in terms which seem to apply only to the forging of passes issued in pursuance of treaties existing at the particular date of that statute: Whereas, if the principle be right at all, the statute should have been extended also to such similar cases which might arise out of subsequent treaties.

5. Impressed, however, with the result of their research, and armed, upon the present occasion, with more extensive powers of inquiry, your Committee have proceeded with the more earnest desire to render the execution of the work entrusted to their hands as serviceable to the public as its scope will allow; in considering the temporary laws of a public nature, with a view, in the first place, to report, as correctly as possible, that class of expired laws which experience has shewn to be of a recurring or periodical nature; and in the next place, to report, as completely as possible, all the expiring laws whatever. The first part of this labour admits, as your Committee are well aware, of a considerable latitude of discretion; the second requires only diligence and accuracy.

Laws may be said to be expired, the duration of which has ceased either by the termination of the express time for which they were limited, or by the extinction of the subject-matter of their operation.

An enumeration of all the expired laws of a public nature, made upon all individual and occasional subjects, would be endless and fruitless; and from this sort of detail your Committee profess wholly to abstain. The laws which they have conceived proper to omit, relate mostly to matters of obsolete custom\* or local regulation†, or personal concerns‡, or they are such as have been superseded§, though not formally repealed, by subsequent mutations in our jurisprudence.

To ascertain conclusively all the expired laws, which belong even to such matters as the general revolutions of time are likely to bring again before us, is perhaps impossible; all that we can do is to approximate to this enumeration. So far as the work is completed it will be useful; and any omissions of this sort will probably be more easily supplied, if the necessity of recurring to them should arise. It will be a principal use of the collection of these expired laws, to exhibit to Parliament an instant view of the legislative measures adopted by our ancestors upon the events of their days, whenever similar occurrences happen to us; enabling us to profit by the experience of former ages; and either to preserve a consistent policy in our laws, or to improve upon the given precedents of other times; or departing from them, to do it advicably, if prudence shall dictate such a departure.

The heads of arrangement under which these expired laws may be most conveniently distributed, seem to be; first, such as accord with the established order of the Constitution in its regular state of operation; and afterwards such as belong to those casualties and calamities which have occasionally disturbed or contravened the general tranquillity or happiness of the nation. Their specification will at once demonstrate their importance. Amongst the first class are, all the events which affect the Crown, the Parliament, Courts of Justice, Army, Navy, Revenue, Commerce and Agriculture, &c. Amongst the latter, are the contingent events of War, Rebellion, Sedition, Dearth of Provisions, Conflagration, and Contagious Distempers, &c. Each of which occasional incidents has

\* Mummings and Visors, 3 Hen. VIII. c. 9. Bowyers, 8 Eliz. c. 10. &c.

† Calais, Gascony, &c. &c.

‡ Grants, pardons, &c.

§ Pilgrims, liveries, sanctuaries, purveyors, &c.



been provided for by the Parliament of the day, and may again require an instant provision at any indefinite moment \*.

Amongst the expiring laws of a public nature, all of every description must be comprehended; and there is an obvious necessity as well as utility for making this register correct: lest, by the undesigned expiration of any statute, some important public benefit should be lost; or some illegal, or even fatal act, should be committed by Magistrates entrusted with the execution of the laws.† Upon this subject your Committee are also of opinion, that it will be expedient for the House hereafter to give an annual instruction to the Committee for expired and expiring laws, directing it to inspect all the statutes of such preceding session, and to insert in the register of expiring laws, those which are temporary; with similar distinctions as to their matter, date, chapter, and duration: transferring

\* With a view to such a knowledge of practical politics, as may be derived from the history of our experimental legislation, the train of inquiry might be usefully pursued by the investigation of other classes of statutes, which, although enacted upon particular occasions and for limited purposes, do not properly fall within the scope of the present reference; namely—occasional statutes, but such as, whether temporary or perpetual in their original form, have been since repealed; or such as, being perpetual in their form, though adapted to a transient purpose, are still to be considered as subsisting. Instances of occasional laws, afterwards repealed, may be found in the sumptuary laws of 3 Ed. IV. c. 5. and 1 Hen. VIII. c. 14. and 7 Hen. VIII. c. 6. repealed by 22 Ed. IV. c. 1. and 1 Jac. I. c. 25. And instances of occasional but perpetual laws, may be seen by referring to the statutes confirmatory of particular parliamentary or judicial transactions, 1 Hen. IV. c. 4. 1 Ed. IV. c. 1. 12 Car. II. c. 12—the statutes respecting Royal grants and resump-tions—1 Ed. IV. c. 4. 4. 5. P. and M. c. 1. 18 Eliz. c. 2.—11 Ric. II. c. 8. 32 H. VIII. c. 27. 5 W. and M. c. 5. § 6. The statutes giving validity to unstamped deeds executed in the American colonies, at a certain period, 6. G. III. c. 51. and the confirmation of marriages solemnized in churches or chapels erected after the general marriage act, by 21 G. III. c. 53.

† 4 Ann. c. 17. was suffered by mistake to expire, See Degols v. Ward. Bro. P. C. 317.—So was St. 29 Geo. II. c. 28. See Burt. 799, 901. So was 4 W. and M. c. 24. § 19. giving six days notice to Jurors. It was continued by several statutes, viz. 7 8 W. and M. c. 33. § 10. 1 Ann. St. 2. c. 13. § 2. 10 Ann. c. 14. § 4. and 9 Geo. I. c. 8. § 2. after which it was never continued. But St. 3 Geo. II. c. 25. was passed for the general regulation of jurors, without any such provision; and this latter statute, by 6 Geo. II. c. 37. § 1. was made perpetual. Yet the trial of Crossfield for high treason, April 1796, at the Old Bailey, was postponed upon a supposed continuance of 7 8 W. and M. c. 33. § 10. In like manner 16 Geo. III. c. 3. empowering the King to call out the militia and summon Parliament on 14 days notice, in case of rebellion or invasion, was suffered to expire. It had been enacted to continue 7 years; and it was not till 26 Geo. III. c. 107. that this law was revived in the general militia act, § 95, 96, 97. So that the nation was deprived of this important constitutional safeguard for three-years, by the expiration and non-continuance of 16 Geo. III. c. 3.

at the same time any law that may have become extinct into the other register of expired laws, if its object be of a nature likely to recur in subsequent times.

6. Your Committee have accordingly proceeded to distribute the statutes referred to their consideration into two tables: and they conceive it proper in this place to remark, with respect to statutes of all sorts, that in the progress of their work, they find that the number marked upon each statute roll is indorsed by the clerk of the Parliament according to its order of passing; one continued series of numbers running through the whole catalogue of acts, public and private, belonging to each session; but that the numerical marks prefixed by the King's printer in the printed copies, by way of chapter, to each public statute, do not correspond with the numbers on the statute rolls; there being one distinct series used in printing for the public acts, and another for the private acts: and farther, that these numerical marks prefixed in print to each chapter, and the figures also prefixed to each clause by way of section, as well as the marginal abstract of each clause, and the punctuation, are wholly the work of the King's printer, and rest on his private authority\*. Some mode, however, of numeration, division, and distinction, being found indispensably necessary to the public convenience, for the purposes of citation and reference, ought for that reason, as your Committee humbly conceive, to be sanctioned by Parliament itself, and executed hereafter under its own authority, in the same manner as the proper parliamentary officer has been recently directed, by statute 33 Geo. III. c. 13, upon similar reasons of convenience, to indorse upon each roll the day on which each act receives the Royal assent: and in addition to this, it might be farther useful, that the titles of all such laws as are temporary should also express the term of their duration.

Your Committee, impelled by an ardent desire to render their labours of permanent service to the Public, having entered upon so large a view of the matters referred to their consideration, beg leave now to close their Report with a suggestion which they cannot forbear to state, as its general importance seems to merit an immediate attention. Promulgation of the statutes has been in all times conceived to be absolutely necessary for giving efficacy to the law, and providing for the safety of the subject.—Whilst the ancient usage prevailed, of annexing the tenor of every ordinance and statute to the proclamation writ which was directed to each Sheriff in his county, this purpose was accomplished in a manner adapted to the circumstances of those times to which the usage belonged†.—Since this course has been superseded by the more convenient and popular use of printing, although the expediency of promulgation cannot

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\* The origin, succession, and extent of the patents granted to the King's printers, is fully stated and discussed in 1 *Blackstone's Reports*, 105. &c. and 3 *Burrow's Reports*, 661, &c.

† Lord Coke, 2 *inst.* 526, says this obtained before printing, and till Hen. VII. and 2 *inst.* 639, the tenor of such a writ is set forth. Lord Coke, in another place, distinguishes the degrees in which the operation of statute 1 Hen. V. c. 5. commenced, *viz.* that as to the King, it commenced from the time of its receiving the Royal assent, but as to the subject, only from the time of its being proclaimed. *Ibid.* 676.

have been diminished, and although the means of it have been so greatly facilitated, and the occasions of it have multiplied so rapidly, yet the measure itself has been wholly discontinued, to the great prejudice of justice, the embarrassment of magistracy, and the peril of individuals. What your Committee would therefore humbly propose, as a remedy for this grievance, would be, that the King's printer should annually (or oftener, if necessary) transmit to the Sheriff, or Custos Rotulorum, or Clerk of the Peace of each county, a printed copy of all public acts; laying aside the present incommodious and expensive form of printing them, and adopting the more serviceable and compact form, which experience has pronounced to be the most preferable for general use. It may deserve some consideration also, whether a limited number of copies should not be printed of all the private acts of each year, to be deposited in the Royal and public libraries, and the superior Courts of Justice. So that all the statutes, of every denomination, enacted in each session, may be rendered more easily accessible to all the subjects of the realm.

In conclusion, your Committee have subjoined, by way of appendix to this their Report\*, one table, or register, comprehending the expired laws, whereof the consideration was referred to them; and another table, or register, of the laws which are expiring. Of the former description your Committee have judged proper to select between four and five hundred statutes, and these they have classed under the distinct heads to which they seem respectively to belong. Of the latter description there appear to be not less than one hundred and fifty original statutes, continued from time to time by near three hundred subsidiary statutes.

With regard, however, to both these tables, your Committee are desirous of representing to the House, that on account of the advanced state of the present session of Parliament, they have been unable to complete them in a manner wholly adequate to the importance of the object, or even to the extent of their own expectations; but they presume nevertheless to hope, that they have collected materials in sufficient quantity, and traced the outline of their arrangement with sufficient distinctness, to render the completion of these labours not very difficult, whenever Parliament may be disposed to resume the subject hereafter.

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\* For the appendix to this Report, the reader is referred to the folio edition, printed by order of the House of Commons.

Supplies granted by Parliament for the year 1796.

## NAVY.

November 6th, 1795.

For 110,000 men, including 18,000 marines 5,720,000 0 0

December 7,

Ordinary of the navy — — — 624,152 1 8

Extra navy — — — 708,400 0 0

May 10, 1796.

Towards discharging the navy debt — — 500,000 0 0

NOTE, May 2, 1796.—It was resolved, that provision be made to satisfy certain navy, victualling, and transport bills, made out on or before 30th. September, 1795, amounting to 4,331,141l. 14s. 10d.

£. 7,552,552 1 8

## LAND SERVICE.

December 2, 1795.

For 49,219 men, as guards and garrisons — 1,358,624 2 9

Forces in the plantations — — 1,666,900 3 6

Difference between the British and Irish establishments 40,195 4 9

Additional to troops in East India — 8,345 16 2

Recruiting and contingences for land forces — 360,000 0 0

Subsistence paid to innkeepers, &c. — 120,000 0 0

General and staff officers, &c. — — 103,642 1 3

Staff officers, &c. on General Clarke's expedition 9,259 18 6

Full pay to supernumerary officers — 127,779 14 11

Allowances to the Paymaster General, &c. &c. 143,490 13 5

Reduced officers of land forces and marines — 118,873 18 6

Reduced horse guards — — 126 1 6

Officers late in the service of the States General 1,000 0 0

Reduced officers of British American forces — 52,500 0 0

Allowances to several reduced officers of ditto 7,500 0 0

Embodied militia and fencible infantry — 917,294 14 1

Contingencies, &c. for ditto — — 210,000 0 0

Cloathing for the embodied militia — 108,538 17 1

Fencible cavalry — — 470,636 19 8

Allowances, &c. for ditto — — 115,000 0 0

December 4.

Extraordinaries, from 25 December 1794, to 14 November 1795 — — 2,646,990 19 10

April 26, 1796.

Extraordinaries, from 15 November, to 24 December 1795 — — 885,673 19 10

May 2.

Scotch roads and bridges — — 4,500 0 0

May 3.

To make good engagements with the King of Sardinia 200,000 0 0

May 7.

Chelsea pensioners — — — 146,057 4 2

Widows' pensions — — — 10,933 16 9

5 0 2

May 10.

Towards defraying extraordinary expenses of the  
army for 1796

Foreign corps	1,350,000	0	0
Compleating the building of barracks	438,035	3	2
	290,000	0	0

NOTE.—By resolutions of the 11th of February and  
26th April 1796, provision was to be made for  
the pay and cloathing of the militia for the year  
1796; and for making allowances in certain cases,  
to the subaltern officers, in time of peace.

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£. 11,911,899 9 10

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## ORDNANCE.

December 2, 1795.

Ordnance, land service for 1796	875,488	14	1
Ditto previous to 31st December 1783 not pro- vided for	279	4	4
Ditto not provided for in 1794	45,656	0	5
Ditto sea service, ditto	61,000	8	9
Ditto land service, not provided for in 1795	762,046	13	6

April 26, 1796.

Ordnance previous to 31st December 1795, not pro- vided for	210,194	15	11
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£. 1,954,665 17 0

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## MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

December 2, 1795.

For the civil establishment of Upper Canada,	7,100	0	0
Ditto — of Nova Scotia	5,415	0	0
Ditto — of New Brunswick	4,550	0	0
Ditto — of St. John's Island	1,900	0	0
Ditto — of Cape Breton	1,800	0	0
Ditto — of Newfoundland	1,232	10	0
Ditto — of the Bahama Islands	4,200	0	0
Chief Justice of the Bermuda Islands	580	0	0
Ditto — of Dominica,	600	0	0
Civil establishment of New South Wales	5,241	0	0

May 2, 1796.

His Majesty's service abroad,	233,485	4	10
Refugee clergy and laity of France,	129,350	0	0
Allowances for American sufferers,	28,500	0	0
Extraordinary expenses of prosecutions relating to the coin	2,966	4	6
Printing Journals of the House of Peers	1,856	12	5
Making up and publishing weekly returns of the aver- age price of sugar	1,334	7	0
Attendance on a Committee and other services	384	7	0
Attendance on a Committee	51	5	9
Money issued pursuant to addresses	29,921	12	6
Convicts on the Thames	8,685	11	4
Ditto in Langstone and Portsmouth harbours	12,072	1	6
Expences on account of New South Wales.	15,088	7	10½
Expences of Mr. Hastings's prosecution	5,000	0	0
Purchase of the Parliament Office	2,741	16	0½

# DEBATES.

839

Expences in the superintendence of the alien act	2,232	14	4½
Stationary shipped for Upper Canada	306	19	0½
To the Bank, for reduction of national debt	200,000	0	0
American and East Florida sufferers, pursuant to an act 28 Geo. III.	197,803	5	5½
Ditto—pursuant to act 30 Geo. III.	53,387	7	6
African Forts	20,000	0	0
Turkey Company	5,000	0	0
Board of Agriculture	3,000	0	0
British Museum	3,000	0	0

May 10.

Veterinary College	1,500	0	0
	990,288	6	4½

## LOANS DISCHARGED.

December 2, 1795.

For paying off Exchequer bills	2,000,000	0	0
Ditto	1,500,000	0	0

February 11, 1796.

For paying off Exchequer bills	2,500,000	0	0
	6,000,000	0	0

## DEFICIENCY.

May 2, 1796.

Deficiency of grants for 1795	2,347,954	10	9½
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February 11, 1796.

Vote of Credit	2,500,000	0	0
Navy	7,552,552	1	8
Land Services	11,911,899	9	10
Ordnance	1,954,665	17	0
Miscellaneous services	990,288	6	4½
Loans discharged	6,000,000	0	0
Deficiency	2,347,954	10	9½
Vote of credit	2,500,000	0	0
Total of supplies	33,257,360	5	8½

WAYS and MEANS for raising the Supplies granted to His Majesty, for the year 1796.

November 10, 1795.

Malt duty	750,000
Land tax	2,000,000

December 8.

Loan	18,000,000
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February 11, 1796.

Exchequer bills	2,000,000
Ditto	1,500,000

February 15.		
Exchequer bills ( <i>vote of credit</i> )	—	2,500,000
April 19.		
Farther loan	—	7,500,000
May 2.		
Lottery ( <i>to consist of 60,000 tickets</i> )	—	780,000
May 7.		
Out of surplus of consolidated fund	—	3,500,000

Note—By resolutions of the 3d of May 1796, annuities were granted to satisfy navy, victualling, and transport bills, made out on or before 30th September 1795

On the 15th of February, and 19th of April, it was also resolved, That the charge of pay and cloathing of the militia, and of allowances to certain of the subaltern officers in time of peace, be defrayed out of the land tax.

Total of Ways and Means	—	38,530,000	0	0
Total of Supplies	—	33,257,360	5	8½
Excess of Ways and Means	—	5,272,639	14	3½

### TAXES.

December 8, 1795.

*Former duties on receipts for legacies, or shares of personal estates discontinued, and*

Proportional duties of 2l. 3l. 4l. and 6l. per cent. charged upon legacies or shares of personal estates.

Ditto—upon real estates descending to the kindred of the deceased, or to strangers.

Additional duty of 10l. per cent. upon the amount of the assessed taxes.

Additional excise duty of 1s. per lb. on tobacco, of the growth of the dominions of Spain or Portugal, imported.

Ditto—of 1d. per lb. on ditto, delivered out for exportation.

Ditto—of 4d. per lb. on ditto, of the growth of Ireland or America, imported.

Ditto—of 1s. per lb. on snuff, imported by the East-India Company.

Ditto—of 6d. per lb. on ditto, imported from any British plantation in America, or from the Spanish West Indies.

Ditto—of 7d per lb. on ditto, imported from any other place.

Additional annual duties on such horses as were before chargeable, viz.

Persons keeping one horse, 10s.

Two—5s. for one

Three, four, or five, 7s. 6d. for each exceeding the number of one

Six, 10s. for each exceeding ditto

Annual duty of 2s. on horses not before chargeable

*Former duties on licences to horse dealers discontinued; and*

Duty of 20l. charged on licences to horse dealers within London, Westminster, and parts adjacent

Ditto of 10l. on ditto, without ditto

Additional excise duty of 1¼d. per square yard on stained paper.

**Note**—By other resolutions of the same day, the allowance for waste on salt carried coastwise, was discontinued—the time allowed for payment of the duties on salt, reduced—and part of the drawbacks allowed on the exportation of sugar, discontinued.

The House also resolved, that certain additional excise duties should be laid upon foreign calicoes and muslins; British linens and cotton stuffs; and British muslins; but these resolutions were not afterwards proceeded upon.

February 15, 1796.

*Part of the duties on receipts for legacies, or shares of personal estates, were discontinued.*

Additional duty of 20l. per ton, charged on Portugal, Madeira, and Spanish wine imported; and also, upon such as may be either in warehouse or stock.

Ditto of 30l. per ton on all other foreign wine, and

*Drawbacks of these duties allowed on exportation.*

Additional duty of 12s. per barrel on made wines, for sale.

April 28.

Annual duties charged on persons keeping dogs, viz.

Greyhound, hound, pointer, setting dog, spaniel, lurcher, or terrier, 5s. each.

Each dog, where two or more shall be kept, 5s.

Persons living in houses which are assessed, and keeping one dog, 3s.

May 2.

Additional excise duty of 30l. per ton, charged on French wine sold by auction, for which the duties imposed last session have not been paid.

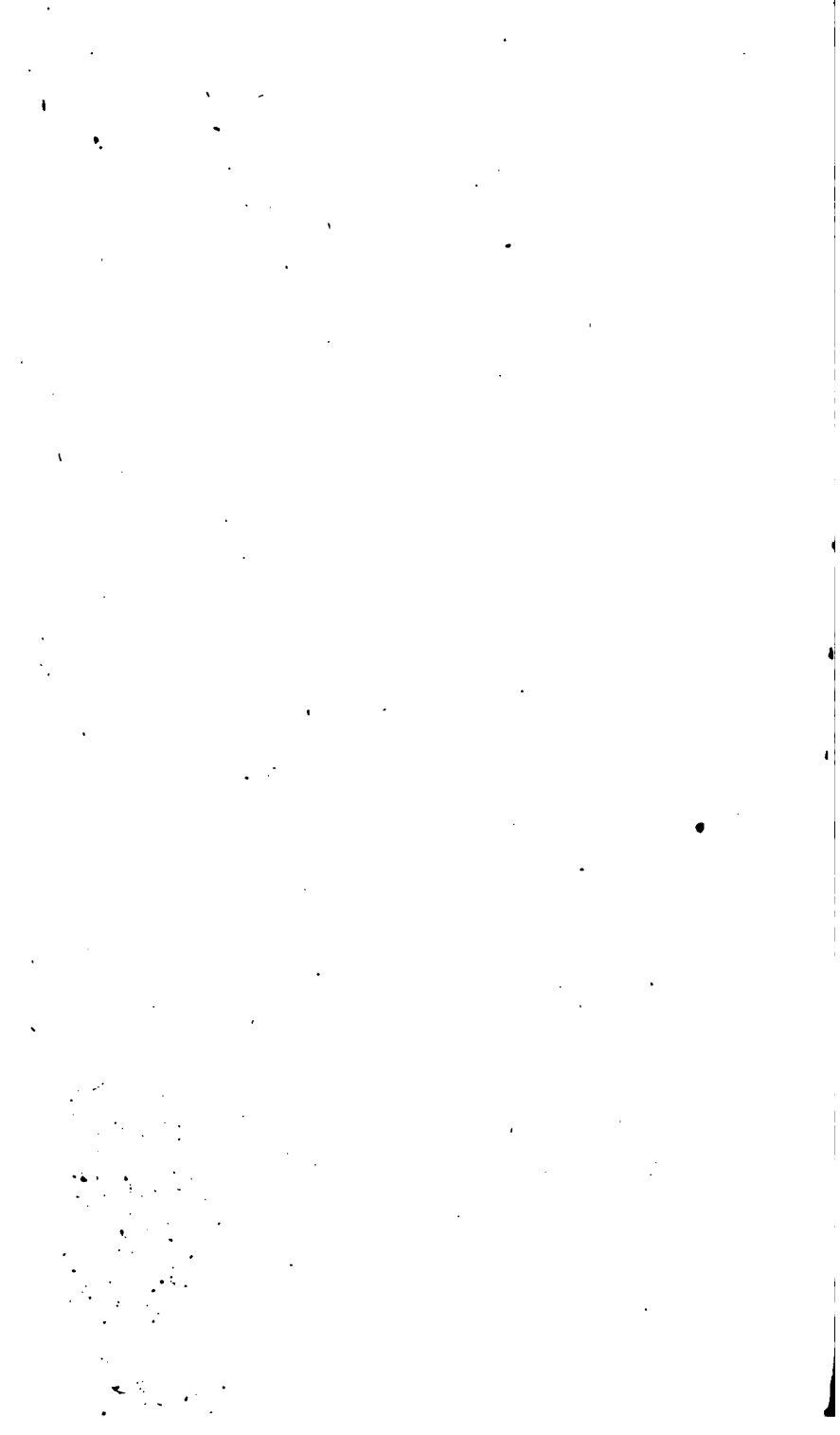
Ditto on ditto, for which the duties imposed this session have not been paid.

Ditto of 20l. per ton on wine of all other sorts for which the duties imposed last session have not been paid.

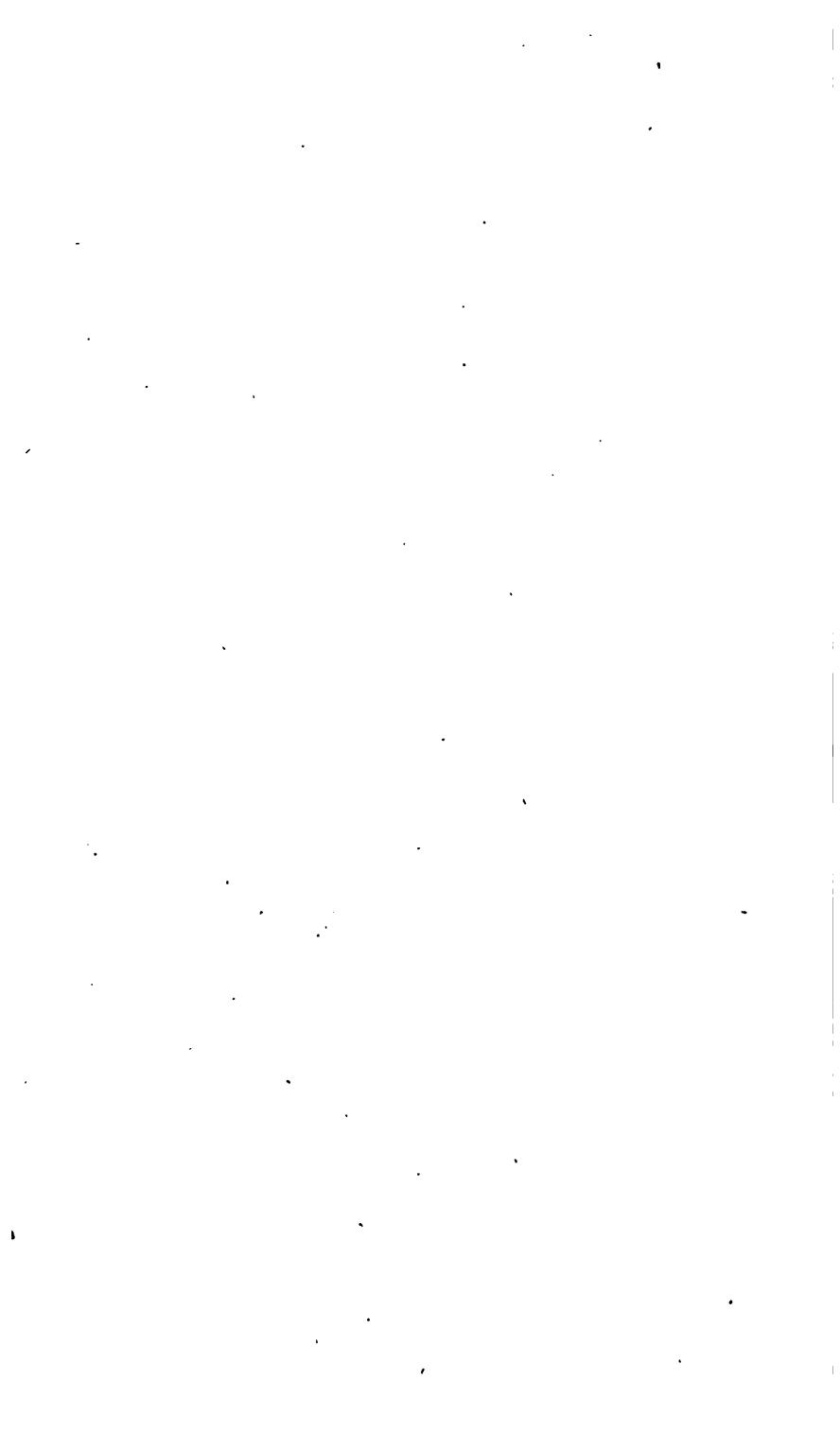
Ditto on ditto, for which the duties imposed this session have not been paid.

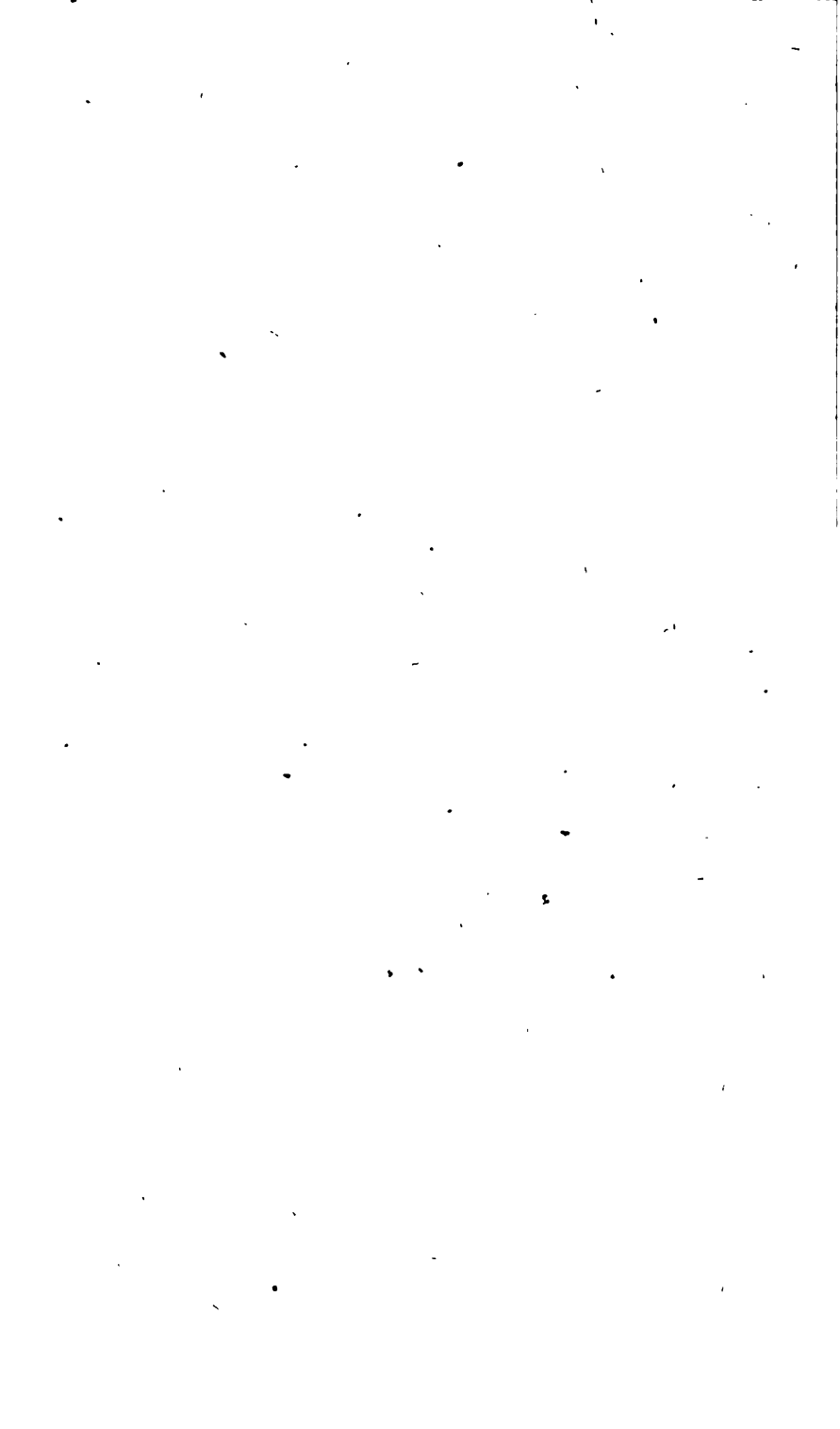
END OF THE FORTY-FOURTH VOLUME.

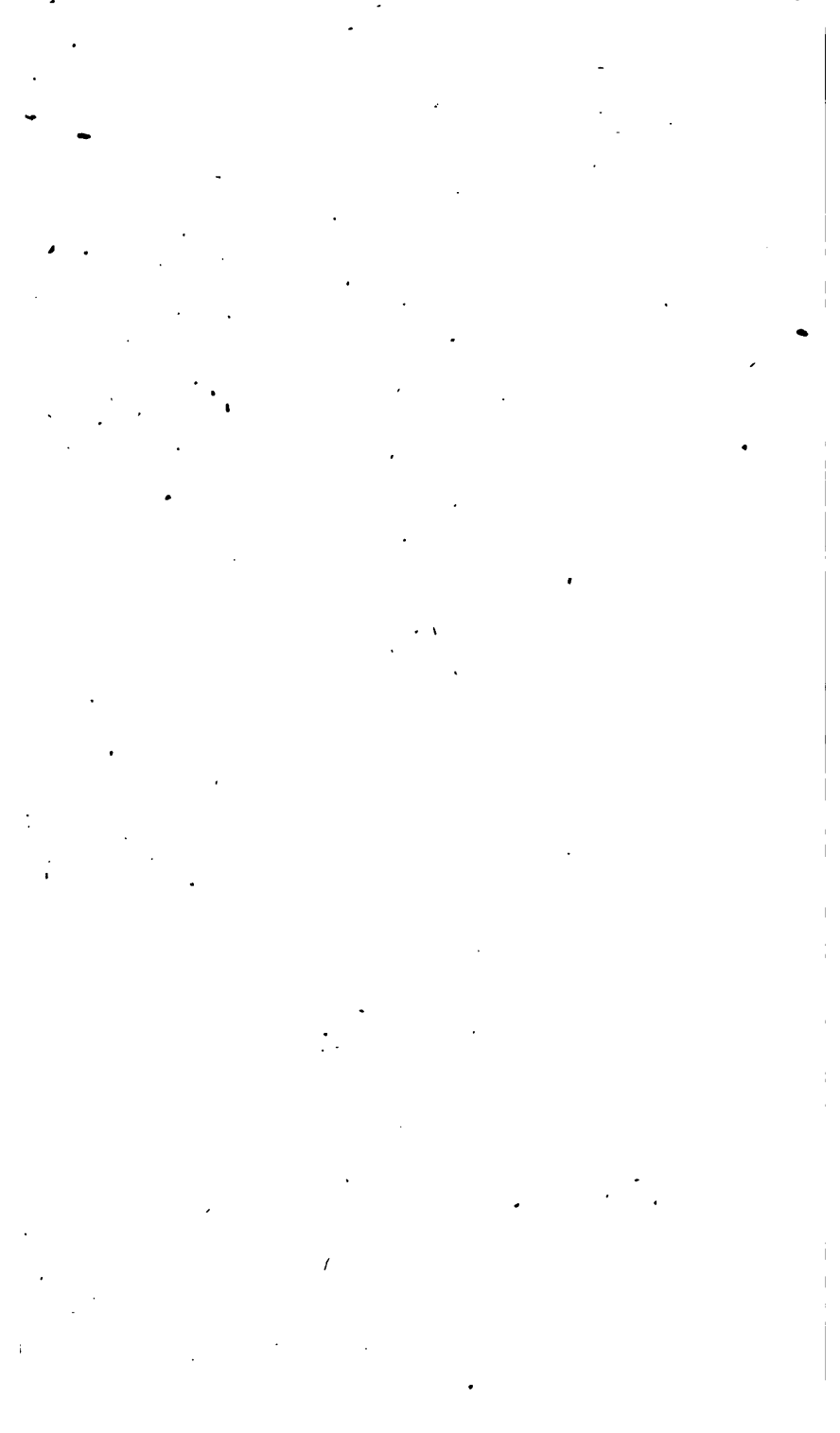












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